



THE
BRITISH SCHOOL
IN TOKYO

Welcome to the Sixth Form



A Guide to the Sixth Form at BST
For BST Students and Parents
Years 11-13

Introduction

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Sixth Form. The last two years of school are intense: lots of hard, academic work coupled with the business of applying to university, balanced by the need to build upon your resilience and independence make the terms fly by. You will build strong friendships, challenge yourself by serving and leading your community and find, at the end of it, that you are quite proud of the capable and confident young adult which you have become. I am always amazed by the delightful transformations that we see as our students stretch themselves and put their talents to work.

This booklet has been written to give you a flying start. There is a lot of information in here about everything from dress code to residentials to coping with your workload. As you read through these pages you'll get a sense of what is expected of you, and indeed, a sense of what life is like for the Sixth Formers at our school.

Ours is a non-selective school and so we are careful to ensure that students are well-supported and challenged in their studies, whether they're aiming to go to a highly academically competitive institution like The University of Cambridge or a niche art-and-design specialist institution like The University of Bournemouth. Both are excellent places to study; it is our job to help students make good judgements about where they are going to thrive.

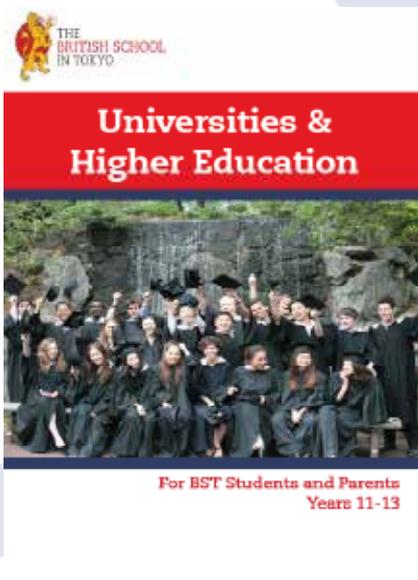
Apart from our culture of hard work, there are three other elements to our Sixth Form at BST which you will find most distinctive. The first is volunteering, the second is leadership, the third is our Outdoors Programme, which bolsters and consolidates the first two. We expect that all our students will find ways to serve and in various ways, lead, their community. Our partnership with Hands On Tokyo and other organisations makes this easy, even for students who don't speak Japanese; there are also lots and lots of opportunities within school. The House system and Vertical Tutoring naturally prompt older students to step up and lead the younger students around them. We know that this process will not only enhance your self-awareness and confidence, but also your wellbeing and self-esteem.

Introduction

Nobel Peace Prize winning Albert Schweitzer said that there were many ways to serve, but insisted that, 'the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve'. I hope that by the end of your time here, you will have challenged yourself academically, and personally, and achieved great things through this process. I am confident that you will have sought and found how to serve, and gained a sense of what you can offer our community and the wider world. Through this process, you will have become more self-aware and more ready to make a success of the next steps that you have to take.



Nora Yamada
Head of Sixth Form



N.B There is also a separate booklet regarding university applications in the same series.

How can Parents help?

The experience of being in the Sixth Form is challenging, and as parents there is a lot that you can do to support your child in making the best of Year 12 and 13. There are three distinct areas where you can help your child: their curricular activities; extracurricular activities, and their wellbeing and personal development.

Curriculum & Academic

- Your son or daughter should be doing 3 hours study, review, preparation and reading each evening, on average. If this is not being done, talk to your child and ask about how they're managing their school work.
- Ensure that your child has a quiet, calm place to study for a significant proportion of the school holidays (which, in Year 11-13, are not really holidays!). Students will be set a considerable amount of work during these periods, and will benefit from a familiar routine and workspace in order to achieve their goals. Christmas and Easter holidays, in particular, are busy, as they are either pre-mock examination or pre-final examination periods.
- Ask your child about their upcoming assessments - they will have at least one of these in each Half Term and these assessments will form the basis of the grade they achieve in their report.
- Discuss your child's targets (in the light of university applications) and to what extent they match the grades they are on track to achieve. What is holding them back from achieving their targets if they are not yet on track to achieve them?
- Please make non-urgent dental and medical appointments outside of your child's timetabled lessons. Missing a single lesson, or worse a double lesson (as many lessons are) can leave a student significantly behind their peers. Since class sizes are small and often discussion-based, it is difficult to catch-up on the learning which has been missed.

How can Parents help?

Extracurricular Activities

- Every Year 12 and 13 Student should have a position of leadership within the school. This might be as a House Representative, as a member of the Student Council, as a Subject Ambassador or a Prefect. Ask them about the opportunities that are available and encourage them to step out of their proverbial 'comfort zone' and sign up for something which will help them to develop their confidence.
- Every Year 12 and 13 Student should complete at least 20 hours of volunteering during each academic year. We have partnerships with a wide number of organisations in Tokyo and beyond in order to facilitate this: Hands On Tokyo, Global Kids Place, Second Harvest, Refugees International Japan, and of course, our own Primary School. Focusing this work in Term 1 seems sensible as Term 2 is short and very busy in the run up to examinations. Of course, your child can find other ways to contribute to the community - this will be easier if they speak some Japanese.
- Make sure your child starts their Year 11 and Year 12 summer holiday with a plan - books to read; research to do; a personal statement or college essay to polish; a MOOC to complete and so on. This time is precious and structure will help them to get the most out of it.



How can Parents help?

Wellbeing

- Days at school are busy and the jump in the workload at the beginning of Year 12 is significant; some students find it overwhelming. Encourage them to be organised and find a system which works for them and enables them to track all their deadlines and keep up with the non-urgent but important tasks like 'reading around' or coursework preparation.
- Teenagers need more sleep than adults (at least 8 hours per night) and shouldn't be working into the small hours to meet deadlines. Although as a school we have high academic expectations, your child's wellbeing is our priority. Please get in touch with your child's Tutor if you feel that they need support in managing their time and prioritising tasks.
- Exercise is an excellent way of managing stress. Encourage your child to do whatever they enjoy, whether it be going for a run in the local park, finding a yoga class or joining the school's sports programme.
- If your family is new to Tokyo or to BST, don't forget about culture shock. This can exacerbate the usual stresses of school and often resurfaces throughout the year. Students often find the beginning of Term 2 difficult after visiting friends and family at home during the Christmas break. Watch out for changes in appetite, mood or social behaviour and let them know that it's normal to struggle.
- Discussions about university applications, in particular, can be tense, and the culture of high achievement at BST can make things difficult for students who might not be achieving straight As/A*s. Our priority is to support and build students' self-esteem, and so it is important to understand that university rankings can sometimes be rather general documents. We focus on making sure that each student is well-informed and feels confident to make the choices which will enable them to thrive at university.
- If you feel that your son/daughter is feeling low and struggling to cope please contact your child's Tutor immediately. We are all here to support students and their families and we understand that the Sixth Form is a demanding time.



The Sixth Form Dress Code

The dress code, like every other element of our Sixth Form programme, seeks to prepare you for your future. Our expectation is that you will dress as the young professional which you will shortly become. The dress code is the same for all our Sixth Formers: smart office wear with a 'Tokyo 'cool biz' twist. This means that in the hotter months students can wear short sleeves and need not wear ties. Male Sixth Formers are required to wear a professional-looking tie in the remainder of the school year.

Smart work trousers are fine; jeans are not acceptable. Skirts must be knee length and not in a skin-tight style, but preferably lined, with a zip, and business-appropriate. Blouses or shirts must be smart; other tops are acceptable as long as they would not look out of place in a business meeting.

Shoes should be polishable (and polished!), so canvas pumps or black trainer-style shoes are not appropriate. Being business-appropriate is the guiding principle, so while court-style shoes are in keeping with this, heels should be moderate. Certainly, heels should be no higher than 2 inches or 5 centimeters.

Subtle make-up (no bright red lipstick) or nail polish in a neutral shade such as a dusky pink or beige is acceptable - blue is not. Hair should be clean and well-maintained and preferably tied up if it is long. Hair dyed in striking or unnatural colours is not acceptable: this can be quite expensive to correct, so please ask your Tutor before investing time and money in an eye-catching new hair colour!

Piercings, other than a pair of small, subtle earrings, are not acceptable, nor are visible tattoos. Japan is quite a conservative society, and piercings on the body (other than ears) or tattoos are frowned upon. For more detailed information on the Sixth Form dress code please refer to the Sixth Form dress code sections on the school website

(http://www.bst.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/6th_Form_Dress_Code.pdf).

What you will need for PE depends a lot on what sports you will pursue. If you're new to BST, it's better to buy only the basics until you get here; once you start, you can speak to PE staff and decide what else you will need. The basic requirements are a polo-shirt in your House colour (light blue, orange, purple or green), a plain navy polo shirt and navy or dark-coloured shorts. These items can be purchased from the Field Hockey Equipment shop in Shibuya.



What is the Sixth Form like at BST?

From a Student's Point of View:



Amy Carson
Head Prefect
2017-2018

Whilst the Sixth Form is the home of many things, above all, its purpose is to prepare students for what will be the most important exams of their lives so far: AS and A Level examinations. Though it is important to stress that a healthy balance is important, and sports and volunteering are essential, the hard work begins on day one, as soon as term begins.

In order to be fully prepared for the adjustment from (I)GCSE (or another Middle Years School Programme) to A Level, it is really important that good work habits start right at the beginning of Term 1. The first term is especially important: because of the structure of the school year at BST it means that half of the taught lessons for Sixth Formers have usually been delivered by the end of Term 1 and many teachers will have finished teaching their AS courses by the middle of Term 2.

One of the biggest freedoms that you'll have in starting the Sixth Form is undoubtedly the time that is granted by private study periods during the school day, often mistaken for an opportunity to take an early lunch or a break between lessons. In truth, these 45 minute slots are the key to success at A Level, and beyond. When you're at university you'll have a lot more freedom in terms of how you spend your time: now is the chance to practise those skills of self-discipline and time-management, while you still have so much support around you. I would recommend planning out your study periods just as your timetabled lessons are planned out. Write in regular tasks that need to be completed each week, such as 'Biology folder: update notes' or 'Economics reading around'. When you have a double period you can get significant tasks such as timed essays or practice papers done.

Another crucial component to the Sixth Form life at BST is leadership. Now more than ever before, our school encourages and nurtures all students in the Sixth Form to be leaders: everybody needs to lead their own lives, don't they? Leadership positions are available in a huge variety of areas, meaning that there are positions for Sports Captains, House Captains, Subject Ambassadors, and even mentors for younger students in each Tutor Group. In sports, drama and music the Sixth Formers are typically regarded as default leaders, and will often be expected to take on the leading position of most teams, performances, groups and ensembles.

What is the Sixth Form like at BST?

Regardless of your ability in terms of the more visible or conventional leadership skills, such as public speaking, there are countless other opportunities available to you. How about organising a school disco for younger students? Managing the backstage operation for the school musical? Taking on the Sixth Form Library Liaison position? There's a leadership course in Year 12 too, and this helps you to think about different leadership styles, and what your strengths are and what you need to work on.

Volunteering is often the way that you discover that you do have leadership qualities. I've volunteered at local primary schools, got involved in a national competition for young entrepreneurs and given my time in countless other ways, and these experiences were probably the biggest factor in me deciding to run for Head Prefect. There are so many choices on offer: get stuck in!

Wherever you're heading after BST, whether that's an internship or art school or Medicine at UCL, we will all need some common skills like resilience, to tackle adult life, and we all need to think about eventually finding a job. Programmes like the Classroom To Boardroom Project in Year 12, give you a nudge in that direction and provide you with the invaluable opportunity to actively seek professional advice regarding your future career(s). Each student is matched with a professional in their prospective field, with whom they will practise interview skills as well as ask questions which are specific to their own career choices. This transition into the real-world will be further supported by the work experience programme, when students will go off on their own to companies that, again, suit their prospective careers, for a week of 'full immersion' into the world of work.

All in all, you have a vast array of opportunities to step into the adult world. It's up to us to grasp them!



What is the Sixth Form like at BST?

From a Student's Point of View:

How does BST support students in thinking about their future career?



**Ayumi
Hulmes**
**Languages
Ambassador
2016-2017**

Work Experience

At BST, Year 12 students attend work experience placements, gaining precious experience and a more informed view of the professional world. At the beginning of the year, all students select two or three fields in which they would be interested in working; then, throughout the year, you will be matched with a company in one of those fields. It's then up to you to correspond with your contact at the company, send your CV (Resume), and respond to any queries about you that they might have.

If they agree to take you on, you'll be working there for a week. Hopefully, they'll offer you further experience, perhaps during the summer or later, while you're at university, you might be able to intern with the same company - even if you're in a different country by then!

The tasks that our students are given vary, ranging from market research and updating directories, to making presentations and preparing notes for meetings or attending press conferences. Although each student has a different placement, carrying out different tasks, the experience enables all of us to explore our career interests in a direct and immediate way.

Autumn Lecture Series

There's a careers lecture every Friday in the Sixth Form Study Room starting at 3:45pm. The lectures are given by senior lawyers, engineers, and business executives, successful entrepreneurs or academics. There's always something to learn, and it's never too early to build your network Sixth Formers are required to attend 4 lectures in Term 1, but you may find yourself attending every week - each speaker has something different to offer.

What is the Sixth Form like at BST?

Classroom to Boardroom

Another great opportunity for Year 12s is the Classroom to Boardroom initiative in Term 2. This programme allows students to be interviewed by senior professionals in Tokyo, ranging from lawyers to academics to engineers to executives in the pharmaceutical industry. Essentially, the aim of this initiative is to provide us students with the experience of a competency-based interview, in order to identify areas for improvement, while there's still time! During the programme, each student is paired with a mentor; once you're connected, you need to take the initiative yourself and liaise regarding the meeting. The interviews last roughly an hour, and include verbal feedback at the end, followed by written, more detailed feedback sent to the School, and then shared with you.

Being the first professional interview that most of us undergo, the process can be daunting, but as long as you've prepared well and done some research on your interviewer, you should feel confident (LinkedIn is a great place to start). Having been through the process myself, I think that the experience was certainly one to learn from, and the feedback I received was incredibly thorough and constructive. This was particularly useful for me as some of the courses for which I'll be applying next year require an interview, and thanks to Classroom to Boardroom, I feel ready!

Lunchtime University Visits

Throughout the year, you'll get regular email updates to let you know about our lunchtime university visits. Every week or two, throughout the school year, various universities from around the world come to talk to our students in the Sixth Form Study Room from 1-1:30pm. This is a great chance to meet the admissions teams face-to-face, without having to deal with jet lag! Year 11s and Year 12s are required to attend at least three of these lunchtime events per year, but all year groups are welcome to attend.

University Fairs

There are two University Fairs each year, in October and March, and as well as this all our Year 12 students attend the large Kanto Plains Fair in September, which hosts dozens of prestigious universities, especially focusing on the US. We are visited by most of the UK's Russell Group universities each year and many more excellent institutions, from Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to The University of Melbourne to The University of British Columbia. Parents are invited to these events too.

Preparing for the World of Work

Developing core competencies and skills

Aside from the obvious focus on academics, there is a strong focus on developing skills such as communication, teamwork, and initiative. Also known as core competencies, these skills are increasingly valued in the workplace, and are common traits which employers look for in potential employees. During the Classroom to Boardroom mock interviews, a large section focuses on identifying these core competencies through questions such as 'Give me an example of an instance when you took the initiative to get something done', or 'When have you experienced a setback in attempting to reach a goal, and what did you do to overcome it?'. In order to answer these questions, students must have experiences in which they have shown initiative, or recovered from a setback. This is where your volunteering and leadership experience will really set you apart and help you to handle these questions with confidence.

How are students able to develop these skills?

In the Sixth Form, there is a wide variety of activities on offer and roles available which will help to develop your core skills and competencies. Leadership roles including House Captain, Sports Captain, or Prefect are offered to students as well as other positions of responsibility such as Subject Ambassador, Student Union Representative, and Peer Listener, to name a few. Year 12s also receive leadership workshops during which students are able to enhance their public speaking skills, learn ways to improve self-confidence, and practice other skills which contribute to building a successful leader. We are also expected to volunteer, and there are a great range of opportunities to do this. Through these roles, students have been able to gain and build on qualities such as time-management, teamwork and communication.

Vertical Tutoring and the Sixth Form Leadership

It is expected that the Sixth Formers will take a leadership role with their Tutor Group, mentoring younger students who might be struggling in a particular subject, or struggling with a skill such as organisation or time-management. The Sixth Formers also help by sharing their experiences as they participate in the various programmes and processes that make up the Sixth Form life. They will give a presentation on applying to university, on work experience, on the Classroom to Boardroom programme and so on, so that younger students are well-informed about what lies ahead for them. They can also help at times when younger students are making decisions about which IGCSE or which A Level courses to take.



Learning to Lead

Every Wednesday afternoon the Sixth Formers participate in a wide range of workshops, lectures and activities, all of which are focused on leadership and life skills, and this part of the curriculum is called 'Learning to Lead'. There is a huge variety of activities: business leaders offer concrete advice on how to show leadership potential, HR experts give advice on crafting a brilliant application letter and, as the exams draw near, we have sessions on revision strategies as well as yoga and meditation and advice on sleep and nutrition.

Many of the sessions are run by Year 13s, and so they learn by stepping up and leading the way, the Year 12s see them, and aspire to their confidence and savoir faire.

The Extended Project Qualification sessions for Year 12 are also run as part of this course and in the process they get specific lessons on presentation, research and time-management skills. Many UK universities value the EPQ highly and will make slightly lower grade offers to students who do well in their project; it's recognised as being an excellent preparation for university studies.

Choosing your A Level Subjects

There is some great advice from our Principal on choosing your A Levels subjects in our A Level options booklet. You can find hard copies at reception or you can read it here:

<http://www.bst.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/6th-Form-A-Level-Options-Booklet-2017-19.pdf>

The Russell Group's publication, 'Informed Choices' is also very helpful for those students aiming for competitive UK universities:

<https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/media/5272/informedchoices-print.pdf>

The key message is to choose A Level subjects that you think you will do well in, and enjoy, and make sure that you're looking ahead to university admission and keeping your options open. For example, if your ambition is to study Sports and Exercise Science at Loughborough University, you should do your research: you might be surprised to find that History and English Literature are among their 'preferred subjects' at A Level. Make sure that your subject combination will enable you to make strong applications to your preferred universities and colleges.

The matter of how many A Levels to study is a very important one, too. Given that UK universities usually make offers based on 3 A Level grades (not four) the best strategy for students is often to focus on three A Levels, and take on an Extended Project Qualification in the subject which they hope to study at university. This will give them the depth of knowledge in that subject which will make application statements easier to write, and ultimately more successful. It is a feature of the UK university system that candidates who have studied independently, and in some depth, showing that they can think through problems and form their own opinions, are at a distinct advantage.

There are cases where four A Levels are to be recommended. For example, where a student has achieved a majority of A*s at (I)GCSE and is therefore well placed to take on an academically challenging route. Alternatively, in the case of students who have some native competency in a language, such as Japanese, and they wish to add it as a fourth subject, this usually works well. Where a student is hoping to study a subject such as Engineering for example, it is often expected that they will have done a fourth A Level in Further Mathematics, and for this reason, Mathematics and Further Mathematics is a competitive combination for those looking to study Science and Engineering.

Choosing your A Level Subjects

Our experience has shown that focusing on getting the highest possible grades in three A Level subjects, and thereby achieving the grades for your conditional offer of A*AA, for example, is often better than spreading your efforts across four subjects, gaining AAAA, but ultimately missing your first-choice institution. These choices need to be carefully discussed with your Tutor, subject teachers, parents and perhaps the admissions teams of your favoured institutions. It is important that you should contact these admissions departments if necessary, rather than having your parents do this on your behalf. These institutions are seeking independent and confident young candidates, after all!



The Sixth Form at a Glance

Year 12

Term	What's expected of me?
1a	Establishing good study routines; Producing a CV (Resume) and submitting initial course and institution choices for Higher Education; setting up volunteering activities; attending Friday Lectures Series & Lunchtime University Visits. Begin work on Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).
1b	Preparing for tutorial meeting (students should present their reflections leadership, volunteering and learning); attending Friday Lectures Series & Lunchtime University Visits.
2a	Mock Examinations; Classroom to Boardroom interviews.
2b	Revision & staying on track with EPQ (Classroom to Boardroom continues).
3a	Revision and Examinations.
3b	Once Examinations are complete: finalise courses and institutions list, write and redraft Personal Statement and / or Common App. Essay. For students applying outside the UK, you will need to create an application timeline. Sign up for summer MOOCs, get your reading lists finalised. EPQ work over summer should be discussed with your EPQ supervisor. Finalise plans for Work Experience.



The Sixth Form at a Glance

Year 13

Term	What's expected of me?
1a	Complete and submit UCAS/other application essay and forms.
1b	Submit EPQ for final assessment.
2a	Mock Examinations.
2b	Finalising university offers - speak to Tutor, parents, and Head of Sixth Form before getting your 'green light' to select your firm/insurance choices.
3a	Make sure you respond to your conditional offers from UCAS, respond promptly to correspondence from your chosen institution. Some A Level Examinations begin.
3b	Begin visa application process if necessary. A Level Examinations.



Key Expectations of the Sixth Form

- 1 Your attendance should be over 95%. Your attendance will be monitored and your Tutor and Head of House may offer support if your attendance is lower than this. It's very important to look after your health and be in school every day.
- 2 You should be studying for around three hours per evening at home on weekdays and at weekends.
- 3 Your effort grade in your school reports should be 1 or above in all your subjects; this is the expected level at BST. Most Sixth Formers achieve this, and can apply for the Sixth Form Privilege, which means that they can have more flexibility in planning their day's work. For example, if a student has a study period first thing they can study at home and arrive in school in time for Period 2. Similarly, if they have a study period at the end of the day, they can go home at 2:45 and work at home instead.
- 4 The Study Room is for quiet study; the Common Room, outside break time, is for work which might require discussion. For example, group preparation for class presentations that require collaboration.
- 5 You are expected to be organised. You may use your own system to record tasks due, but if you miss three homeworks in the course of a year, you'll have to use the school planner.
- 6 During breaks from school (Half Term or Christmas/Easter holidays), you should still be doing a significant amount of study, especially before your mock or actual Examinations. We recommend thinking about your day in three sessions: morning, afternoon and evening. You should be studying for two out of these three sessions, five days a week in advance of your Examinations.
- 7 As Sixth Formers, you need to attend four Autumn Lecture Series events in Term 1; Year 12s must also attend four Lunchtime University Visits.
- 8 All Sixth Formers are expected to vote at least once in the Chrysalis Award

Key Expectations of the Sixth Form

- 9 Every Sixth Former is responsible for keeping the Sixth Form areas clean and tidy. If you don't respect these spaces, you won't be able to use them
- 10 You are expected to complete around 20 hours of volunteering during the course of each academic year during your time in the Sixth Form. Completing your Duke of Edinburgh Silver or Gold Awards is an excellent, structured way to approach volunteering in our community and is warmly encouraged.
- 11 You are expected to check your email at least twice a day: in the morning and in the afternoon. For some key school programmes like work experience or Classroom to Boardroom, if you do not reply to emails within a specified window of time you may not be able to participate in the programme.
- 12 You should start all emails to staff and other adults (such as your work experience supervisor or your Classroom to Boardroom interviewer) with the salutation 'Dear Ms Yamada' or 'Dear Mr Thomas' and end with an appropriately formal phrase such as 'Thanks for your help' or 'Best wishes'. Remember that if you are not sure how to phrase an email to an adult you should always err on the side of formality.
- 13 You are expected to set an example of excellent behaviour and work ethic to the younger students in the school. In particular, your behaviour and your language should demonstrate a respect for others in our community. Any racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise disrespectful language will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary measures.
- 14 You are expected to conform to our uniform policy and come to school every day dressed in a professional and business-like manner.
- 15 You are expected to step-up when the opportunity presents itself, around the school each day. You are expected to take responsibility for younger students and to help them deal with problems and to support them when needed.

The Sixth Form Residentials

You will take part in four residentials during your time in the Sixth Form. The Outdoors Programme has a special importance at BST and we firmly believe that, having hiked up a mountain (or skied down one!) together with your classmates will enrich the relationships that you have here and help you to be the self-aware and confident young person we're aiming for you to be. During these residentials, after a day of helping out local farmers or sea-urchin fishing or paragliding, or whatever it might be, there's the opportunity for deep and rich conversations with your teachers. Uninterrupted by the usual busy rhythm of a school day, you will be able to sit down and fully discuss options you may be considering or get vital feedback on a college essay or application statement. Kit lists and detailed information will be sent out in advance of each trip, but if you're new to BST it will be useful to know that for each of these residentials you'll need sturdy shoes (hiking boots or similar) and it's worth investing in a pair of light hiking trousers with pockets: you'll be glad you did!

Mount Fuji (Year 12 & 13, September)

The Fuji Residential gives the Sixth Form a chance to get to know each other as a distinct community within our school. The programme combines challenging outdoor activities such as paragliding, hiking, rafting and climbing with specific programmes for the two different year groups. Year 13 focus on finishing off their college/university applications, while Year 12 focus on researching what these choices might be, as well as getting their CVs (Resume) ready and preparing themselves for A Level study. The September Residential usually happens in the second week of Term 1, and as we always have lots of new students in Year 12, it's a great way of making new friends. We usually visit the Kanto Plains University Fair on the way back to Tokyo, as this event also takes place at the end of the second week in September.



The Sixth Form Residentials

Moriumius (Year 12, June)

This trip takes place after the AS or end of Year 12 Examinations. The main purpose of the trip is to firm up higher education choices, draft application statements and draw up a programme of summer reading and research to enhance your candidacy for whatever course or institution to which you might be applying.

The Moriumius Project gives us a breath taking backdrop for this 5 day trip: we pitch in with the daily work of local farmers and fisherman and share in the incredible food which is produced as a result. For more information on Moriumius read Mr Christian's blog <http://www.bst.ac.jp/Principalsblog/ogatsu-black-stone-black-wave-bright-future/>



Kunisaki (Year 13, June)

For your final residential trip at BST students have a good measure of autonomy. Our 2017 graduands chose the Kunisaki Penninsula for the hiking, the beaches, the opportunity to learn about Buddhist meditation and the chance to work with local farmers. The days were long (and hot!) but the onsen was reviving and the on-site observatory and perfect conditions meant that we were able to do some amazing star-gazing. A highlight of the trip (for the teachers!) was the fact that the students planned, shopped for and prepared some of the meals for the group. It's always lovely when something exceeds your expectations!



The Moriumius Project: Rekindling Happiness from Devastation



**Kyoka
Hadano**
Senior Prefect
2017-2018

This article
was written
for the COBIS
publication,
'World
Student
Magazine'.

The lunch table abuzz with anticipation, thirty-odd hungry seventeen-year-olds stare greedily at the plates that lie before them - fresh sea pineapples barely hours old, homemade sausages and bowls of rice they cooked themselves in hand-cut bamboo over a wood fire.

However, the elderly Japanese locals amidst them gently advise them to refrain from immediately tucking in. "We must thank nature for the ingredients of our meal," they say, "We must thank the people who grow and harvest these vegetables, this fish, this rice. Our meals are made with love. And for that, we say itadakimasu - 'we humbly receive'." Everyone gently bows over their dish and repeats this Japanese grace.

"Now, let's eat!" Laughter and lively chatter ensue.

This scene takes place by Kuwahama Elementary School, built almost a century ago using traditional Japanese construction techniques and local Ogatsu inkstone. It is difficult to believe that until just recently, this school had lain abandoned at the top of a hill for nearly a decade, having closed in 2002.

The school overlooks a valley largely dominated by a vast construction area, where the occasional piece of debris - a broken plate, a saucepan lid - is the only evidence that this had been populated in the past. Scarcely 6 years ago, this had been part of Ogatsu, a bustling coastal town where fishermen rose before dawn to bring catches of sea urchins and oysters and children sat, pencil in hand, before blackboards in classrooms. Then one March afternoon, the town had been destroyed in just a few hours by a 19 metre tall 'black wave', that also dragged away livelihoods, homes and 236 lives. This region of coastal north-eastern Japan was one of the worst affected under the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Gentaro Yui, founder of the educational theme park KidZania in 2004, came upon Kuwahama Elementary School as a volunteer following the natural disasters, helping to deliver food and emergency supplies to those in need. Discovering how valuable the school had once been to the local community, he saw an opportunity to restore it to its former glory.

The Moriumius Project: Rekindling Happiness from Devastation

Two tough years of renovations ensued, involving the hard work and energy of up to five thousand volunteers from all over Japan. The restored facility, named the Moriumius Project, retains key aspects of its former identity as a rural primary school - with its original clock above the entrance and blackboards down the corridors. But looking closely, one observes subtle changes: the school canteen converted into a stylish dining area, with sliding glass panels opening onto a terrace; tastefully designed dormitories that had once been classrooms.

The Moriumius Project is designed to be sustainable and environmentally friendly. Drainage water is recycled and baths are heated by a traditional wood stove, with biodegradable soap and toothpaste. Ingredients for meals are sourced locally, with fresh seafood, rice grown in nearby paddy fields with livestock such as pigs, goats and chickens also situated in the facility.

In late June, thirty one Year 12 students from the British School in Tokyo came to stay at the facility. Our mornings would start by a routine clean, with everyone picking up traditional dusters and brooms to tidy up yesterday's mess. We collected eggs, walked the goats and cooked our own rice and miso soup in traditional iron kama pots over an outdoor stove. Every meal would begin with itadakimasu - a humble thanks to nature and the people who helped to get the food on our plates.

It was a wonderful opportunity for us to help the local people of Ogatsu. We cleaned barnacles off buoys and nets, removed weeds and helped at the community rose garden, created to memorialise those who passed away in the 2011 tsunami. The kindness of the local people was heartwarming - seeing that we were sweaty, they would drop by to give us cold tea, ice cream and plates of amayaki cakes. Some of us also created an art piece alongside the guidance of Sky, the artist-in-residence at the time: a painting of the Ogatsu pier, made with handmade recycled paper over traditional ink stone slates from the area.

In the space of five days, we came to appreciate the importance of helping others, and how simply one can adopt a sustainable means of life. But most importantly, staying at Moriumius put into perspective the terrible disaster of 2011, and how we can all work to make a difference. Although there are many sad stories of nature and its power to destroy, it is heartwarming to see that the story of Moriumius is a happy one.



Supporting you through The Sixth Form

Most students will feel overwhelmed at some point during the two-year course that makes up the Sixth Form. There are many people in school who can support you and, as a team, we have a great deal of experience in helping young adults come to terms with their workload and the (seemingly) daunting demands that confront you. The most important piece of advice is certainly to talk to someone and get some support.

Here are some of the people who will be happy to help you:

- **Your Tutor(s)** - the teachers who will know you best and who will have an overview of your progress and your targets - your Tutor(s) will always be able to help if you're struggling with anything.
- **Year 13 Students** - all of you will have older students in your Tutor Groups, but there are also Prefects, Peer Listeners and House Representatives in Year 13. Students in these leadership positions have lots of experience of juggling deadlines and balancing demands. They've been through Year 12 and they will be happy to help you if they can.
- **Heads of House** - our House Leaders are very experienced teachers who will have dealt with hundreds of students' problems over the years. They will be able to give you some good advice or connect you to another person who has specific expertise in the area in which you're struggling.
- **Subject Teachers** - if you are concerned about your progress in a particular subject, your subject teacher is the best person to consult.
- **School Counsellor** – Christine Tzeng, our counsellor can be reached on her school email ctzeng@bst.ac.jp or your Tutor(s) can refer you to her.
- **Safeguarding Lead** - our Deputy Head, James Thomas, is in charge of the overall safety of students at BST. You can speak to him if you are struggling or if you are worried about another student.
- **TELL** - Tokyo English Life Line offer support in English. They have expertise in supporting people with a range of mental health issues <http://telljp.com/>. They offer a life line in English too - 24 hours a day (03 5773 0992). They can help with problems large and small and have specialist experience in helping young people with issues from sexuality and gender identity to eating disorders, bullying, culture shock, substance abuse and family breakdown.



THE
BRITISH SCHOOL
IN TOKYO