



SBL Academy On the Radar



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November 2023

What is your child's attendance rate at school?

Our ability to track progress of individual students in English schools has improved dramatically over the last 20 years or so. Shortly after a child enters secondary school, data is provided for us which gives us an understanding of the potential qualification outcomes of each student when they get to Year 11 based on each child's performance at primary school.

Our ability to use this data is now quite sophisticated. For example, we know that in last year's Year 11 leavers' group, if a child attended 95% of the time or better then they achieved nearly a whole extra grade better than you might have expected in each subject. Equally (and sadly), for a student with an attendance rate of less than 90% then that student lost one whole grade or similar in almost all subjects against what we might have expected. Having good attendance at school is a crucial factor in a child's overall progress as the following charts show:

Depending on a child's attendance at school, qualifications might have looked like this for a typical student last year:

Key dates

Thursday 9th November: Year 10 Parent/Carer Evening

Friday 10th November: Remembrance Event

Monday 13th—Wednesday 22nd November: Year 11 Internal Exams

Thursday 23rd November: P16 Parent/Carer Evening

Monday 27th November—Friday 1st December: Year 11 Work Experience

Wednesday 6th and Thursday 7th December: Nasal flu for Years 7 to 11 inclusive

Wednesday 13th December: Christmas Concert

Friday 15th December: Last day of term (1.25pm finish)

Year 11 results of a student who attends 95% of the time or more

Subject	Expected grade	Actual grade
English	Grade 8	Grade 9
Maths	Grade 6	Grade 7
Science	Grade 4	Grade 5
Geography	Grade 6	Grade 7
History	Grade 4	Grade 5
Art	Grade 5	Grade 5
Drama	Grade 7	Grade 7
PE	Grade 4	Grade 5
French	Grade 8	Grade 9

Year 11 results of a student who attends 90% of the time or less

Subject	Expected grade	Actual grade
English	Grade 8	Grade 7
Maths	Grade 6	Grade 5
Science	Grade 4	Grade 3
Geography	Grade 6	Grade 6
History	Grade 4	Grade 3
Art	Grade 5	Grade 4
Drama	Grade 7	Grade 7
PE	Grade 4	Grade 3
French	Grade 8	Grade 7

The tables above shows that, on average, a Year 11 student at SBL Academy with good attendance (95% +) achieved nearly a grade more than their 'expected' grade in most of their subjects. This compares to another similarly able student who attended for 90% of the time or less. Thankfully, most of our students in Year 11 had good attendance last year and therefore our results were strong!

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 days	2 weeks	60 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	120 lessons

Our table left indicates how what might seem like 'just a few days' of absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

At SBL in recent years we have been able to ensure that a strong majority of students actually achieve more than their expected grades – but only if they attend well. An attendance rate which drops to a very concerning rate (less than 90%) almost guarantees weaker results and the loss of opportunity that this brings.

Lateness to school also has the following negative losses in education:

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching <u>Lost</u> <u>in one Year</u>	Which means this number of <u>lessons missed in one year</u>
5 mins	3+ Days	15+ Lessons
10 mins	6+ Days	30+ Lessons
15 mins	9+ Days	46+ Lessons

Good attendance is one of the most crucial factors impacting on a child's progress in school. A child who is frequently absent suffers due to a loss of much needed routine and a lack of regular contact with friends. In our experience, a child who attends school regularly has strong friendships, a level of confidence which is more likely to be high and that child is also likely to build the physical and mental resilience needed for adult life.

To help parents and carers monitor attendance, details and attendance rates are always available via our parent information portal MCAS. We will continue to send these details home regularly so that all parents can be aware of this vital piece of information. We also send home regular congratulations to students with good attendance as well as praise points for those who deserve them.

Please contact your child's Head of House or tutor if you have any questions on attendance or any other matter.

Best wishes to you, your child and your family for the rest of the school year.

Mr S White
Deputy Headteacher

From Carvings to Cultivation



Our **Eco Council** have been carving pumpkins. We've saved lots of pumpkin seeds to plant next year in our SBL garden.

Miss Fruhwirth



Miss Harriott's Heroes: SBL's U13 squad's unbelievable triumph

Thursday 28th September 2023

SBL v Redmaids U13 – What a match! This squad was entered into the Sisters in Sport Netball Shield Competition, becoming SBL's first team to ever enter. The girls knew we had a tough initial match being drawn against Redmaids, but went into the match with determination. Whilst the first 2 quarters saw us down by 5 goals, a half-time switch-up in positions and team talk made all the difference in the third quarter, only allowing Redmaids to score one goal versus our 7 goals. Going in to the final quarter, Redmaids changed their squad putting their strongest players on and with only a 2 goal lead, the girls knew this would be close. A nerve-racking final quarter, with the support of both staff and students, we managed to take the win with a 3-point difference. I am unbelievably proud of this group of girls and the 16-13 victory, you did yourself and SBL proud, let's get ready for the next round! – Miss Harriott



Promising Start: SBL U13s Set the Bar High in National Cup

Wednesday 27th September 2023

The U13s Girls played their first National cup match at SBL against Backwell School. The girls had an excellent start winning the game with a confident 4-0 win. Some students making a very impactful debut for SBL. Looking strong and promising heading into our Round 2 fixture, which will be confirmed shortly – Miss Mills & Mr Perry

Scorers:

L. Hallett x3

D. Mercer x1

Player of the match: L. Hallett

SBL dominates National Cup with a 14-0 win



Thursday 12th October
National Cup U13s Round 2
Oakfield Academy vs SBL

These girls had an outstanding game, winning 14-0 against Oakfield Academy. It was a very impressive performance as seen below, two students scored 5 goals each, with one student narrowly missing a hat trick. Winning aside, I am immensely proud of how supportive the girls were to the opposition, supporting an injured player and being gracious in the win. Great work girls! Round 3 here we come!

Goal scorers:

I. Hallett x5
D. Mercer x5
L. Jones x2
B. Redfern x1
L. Butler x1

Player of the match:

D. Mercer

Let's clear the air: please turn off your engine at school drop-off!

Please can parents/carers turn their engines off while waiting for students outside of school site.

We have had some concerns from neighbouring homes.

Thank you

SBL's netball stars shine bright

Tuesday 17th October: Year 10 and 11 South Glos Netball Tournament

SBL hosted a South Glos tournament for year 10 & 11 students. Pictured above you can see we were fortunate to enter two teams into this tournament. Both teams played incredibly well and should be proud of the sportsmanship and hard work they demonstrated.

Our Year 10 team finished in 4th position, which was a very impressive effort. Our Year 11 team won the tournament and will be through to the next round playing the winners of U16s Yate competition.



Unwrap the Magic of Music: SBL's Christmas Concert

We are pleased to announce the annual SBL Christmas concert will take place on Wednesday 13th December, starting at 7pm. The concert will feature performances by a wide range of student groups and soloists and will hopefully put you in a festive mood!

Tickets are £3 for adults, £2 for all concessions (OAPs / under 18s). Tickets go on sale from 12th November and are [available online only via Ticketsource](#). Follow the web link below or scan the QR code. Seating is unreserved. Doors will open at 6.30pm.



We hope you will be able to join us as we bring the school community together to celebrate the festive season.

Learning values and beliefs in the heart of Bristol

Bristol – the place where we live and work and one of the UK's most vibrant and thriving cities with a rich and varied history. It's no surprise then that the city is so important in our learning across the Humanities subjects (History, Geography and Values and Beliefs) here at SBL. Over two consecutive Thursdays before and after the half term holiday students headed into the city centre and here's what we got up to ...

We visited Bristol Cathedral to link in with our Values and Beliefs learning about Abrahamic religions and Christianity in particular. The Cathedral is one of Bristol's most recognisable buildings and inside we toured the building, looking at monuments and important items used for Christian worship, such as the altar and font. We had time to sit in the nave – the main part of the building – and look up at the roof and to admire the stained glass windows. There has been a Christian place of worship on the site of the cathedral since 1148 with the current building dating from 1539. The cathedral is also home to some of the finest Norman architecture anywhere in the world (in the Chapter House) dating from the Norman Conquest. Here there was time to do some sketching, look at the architecture or to sit and have a few moments of quiet reflection.



The SS Great Britain taken from on board the Bagheera



Students looking at the now world famous Colston statue plinth



Students looking at Bristol's War Memorial in the centre of Bristol

The best way to see the many sites of the harbour is by boat and we did just that with a tour on board the Bristol Packet's Bagheera. Not only was the boat a welcome relief from the rain but a great way to see the world famous SS Great Britain, hear all about the ship's history from the on-board commentary and to find out about the varied sights and buildings around the harbour. Urban regeneration and renewal is a key part of student learning in Geography.

A theme running through the day was Bristol's link with slavery. Often controversial, clues of past links to slavery can be found around the centre. We looked at the plinth where the statue of slave trader Edward Colston stood before it was pulled down. This was a great opportunity to see first hand what's in our curriculum as all students get the chance to learn and reflected on Bristol's links with slavery in the KS3 History curriculum. More links were found back in the Cathedral where work is under way to fund and design a memorial to slavery victims. We also saw a plaque on the outside of the M Shed Museum and being so close to Remembrance Day, we also looked at the city's memorial to victims of war.

Mr Hill and the Humanities Department

To study, or not to study?

At the end of last term, SBL hosted a jam-packed Post-16 Opening Evening where many Year 11 students faced-up to one of life's big decisions – what A Level subjects to study?

Here a selection of SBL English teachers reminisce on their own A Level choices back in the day ...

Miss Evans, Teacher of English: One of my clearest primary school memories is of a story I'd written about a plane-ride being read aloud by my teacher. I still remember the pride I felt when my journey through the clear azure skies was recounted in front of my peers. I'd always enjoyed and excelled in English but never associated the subject with a clear career path (like you'd associate being a doctor with taking Biology and Chemistry). However, as demonstrated through my airborne escapades, the passion was always there. When I reached Year 11, I planned to study business at university due to the hefty starting salary most business grads enjoy – why else would you slog through soul-sucking theories like Ansoff's Matrix and Greiner's Growth Model? However, I figured that as I would spend the majority of my life in the workplace I should probably choose a career in a field I enjoy – quality of life and all that. So I opted to take English Literature at A Level, and subsequently as my degree. This was the best decision of my life. The three years I spent immersing myself in the works of the Romantics and Feminist Theorists, under the wing of world-leading experts, were some of the happiest and most satisfying of my life. What I'm trying to say is that I'm proof you can make a career out your passion: a career that makes me feel as if I'm happily soaring through those cloudless climes once again!

Miss Hall, Associate Assistant Headteacher: When I was asked to choose which A-Levels I wanted to study I was at a point in my life where I had no idea which path I wanted to take – I was 16! The advice I was given way back then was to decide on a career and pick subjects that would serve me well in that decision. "Choose a career! Now? But I am 16, how am I meant to know that?" I shrieked. But I did know that I liked knowledge and I liked challenge. "I'm going to do Maths, English and Biology," I said sitting back in my chair, folding my arms and waited for the protestations. And they came. "You can't do that! You need to have more of a clear direction!" they said. "But I like these subjects. I can do well in these subjects. I can do ANYTHING with these subjects," I said earnestly. And so it was. I loved learning how the natural world worked. I loved learning how Maths applied to the real world. But what I enjoyed the most was the insight into being human that literature gave me. My small world literally exploded into the infinite possibilities of experience! Every book gave me a new perspective: I travelled, I suffered, I celebrated, I knew more. With every literary experience I became more. And I wanted to share...

'I had no idea which path I wanted to take – I was 16!'

Miss Urch, Teacher of English and SEND Support: I consider myself very lucky to have had the opportunity of studying A level English Literature, I almost didn't. In honesty, I wasn't always a model Year 11 student, and maybe at times I was even a bit of a tearaway! In fact, at one point, I reached the stage where I thought I had lost all interest in education because I thought I was a failure, and that I'd never reach my goal of becoming a teacher. Then, when I thought I'd really blown it, my favourite English teacher asked to see me after school. She looked at me with a frown, then said: "What is it you want from life?" I simply answered: "To be a teacher." To my surprise she laughed! "Well get on with it then!" she shouted. Her anger shocked me. She went on to tell me that I have a natural understanding and love of English Literature and that I was good at accents! She told me to stop feeling sorry for myself and angry with others and just get on with it. That's just what I did. I had to eat a lot of humble pie and convince other teachers that I was worthy of studying A levels and I thank that teacher for having faith in me, when I didn't have any in myself.

Miss Roberts, Assistant Curriculum Team Leader for English: Looking back at my school days, English was the thing that I always, always loved. It was the perfect escape from teenage drama! So picking English to study at A Level was something I always wanted to do. My very first English A Level lesson was just the best. A lot of that was down to my teacher, Mr Reid. He introduced us to new writers, new ideas and new ways of thinking. I remember my first piece of coursework was an article on the mind of a teenager (perhaps foreshadowing my later career choice?), and I loved writing every sentence! We then shared our writing by reading them to the class and that's what I love most about English – that it creates discussion and conversation. After this, I started my degree at UWE (English Literature and Linguistics) and loved the challenge this offered me. Luckily not all of my university days were spent breaking down the different parts of sentences, but my love for the subject continued and after a few years of selling mortgages and working in childcare, I found my way back into education and completed my teacher training. With hindsight it's clear those early noughties years spent at Post-16 was where my love for English began.

Dr Condon, Curriculum Team Leader for English: Ever since proudly conquering my seven times-table at primary school, I'd always been nifty with sums – so funnily enough Maths was my obvious go-to choice of A Level and, quite honestly, I can't recall why I opted for English Literature and History as well. But I did, and the ducks lined-up as if by magic the day my A Level English teacher put into my hands a well-thumbed edition of James Joyce's modernist masterpiece *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.^{*} Heading home from sixth-form that dusky November evening, trapped on a gridlocked 49 bus as it nudged its way up Stapleton Road towards Eastville Park, I turned away from the steamed-up windows to page through the novel only to discover something even more expansive and mindboggling than the Mathematical concepts of Pi or infinity: creative genius. Teleport-forward two years, I was an English undergraduate exploring the dreaming spires of Oxford under the tutelage of the brilliant academic and scholar Jeri Johnson, internationally-renowned authority on literary modernism and all-things James Joyce. The rest, as they say, is history. In retrospect, my journey into English Literature all feels rather accidental, but then as Joyce himself famously quipped: "A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery." For me, A Level English Literature smashed open the portals of discovery – that dusky November evening on the 49 bus.

'... A Level English Literature smashed open the portals of discovery ...'

Sunday Sessions VOCALS

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10am - 12.30pm ages 7 - 10

1.30pm - 4pm ages 11 - 14

Sunday 12th November

Meadowbrook Primary School

Bradley Stoke

TICKETS: £15 per student

Free for students in receipt of free school meals

Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/sundaysinging>

For queries: music@wema.org.uk



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South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC) is the local parent carer forum working to represent and support parent carers of children and young people (age 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in South Gloucestershire.



Our 360° Outreach Project supports schools and families working together to build a picture of the “whole child” and better understand the child’s needs, at home and at school.

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