



CENTRAL FOUNDATION BOYS' SCHOOL

10 November 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are now at a crucial stage in the academic year, where all pupils should be finalizing and submitting their applications to the post-16 destinations of their choice. It is a legal requirement that all young people must be in full time education or training until the age of 18, so ensuring your pupil has well-informed options available to them at the end of this academic year is important.

All of our young people should apply to at least **three different** sixth forms/colleges. While it is understandable that a pupil and parents/carers may have a preference in where they would like to attend in September 2024, we must be mindful that some providers may be more competitive than others and so it is always good to have a range of options for your young person to choose from. Applications to sixth forms and colleges are free, so pupils can submit more than three applications if they want to have a wider range of options.

If you intend to apply for sixth forms, please be mindful that many of these post-16 providers will have deadlines in January and you must submit your applications by this deadline otherwise your pupil will be placed on a waiting list. If you and your pupil have not yet submitted applications, please check the sixth forms/colleges websites to confirm when their application deadlines will be. We would encourage all of our parents/carers to be part of this process with their son, as it is beneficial for both pupils and parents/carers to understand the pathways and routes available after GCSEs.

Applications for Central Foundation Sixth Form will close on Monday 8 January 2024.

If you are unsure of which sixth forms/colleges to apply for, please use our Guide as a starting point – although this list is not extensive, it highlights the most popular destinations for young people in our area. You can find this guide on the Parents page of the school website at: <https://www.centralfoundationboys.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sixth-Form-and-College-Guide-Dec-2022.pdf>

We also encourage all families to consider the range of qualifications available to young people at the next stage of their education. On the next page is a break down of the options available to pupils.

HEADTEACHER: JAMIE BROWNHILL

CENTRAL FOUNDATION BOYS' SCHOOL, COWPER STREET, LONDON, EC2A 4SH

T: 020 7253 3741 | F: 020 7336 7295 | E: info@cfs.islington.sch.uk | W: www.centralfoundationboys.co.uk



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A levels

A levels are a Level 3 qualification that will take you two years to complete. They can be done at a sixth form attached to a school, or at a sixth form college (which is a college that offers A levels as well as other courses). You must achieve five GCSEs grade 4-9 including Maths and English, but be advised that some providers may have specific entry requirements for certain subjects such as the sciences and Maths. You should always check the entry requirements for every course you intend to apply for.

There's a wide range of A level subjects you can do, which will depend on the provider you are applying for. Pupils must complete three A levels during their 2-year course in order to access an undergraduate course at university, but some providers may allow pupils to do four A levels.

Vocational Qualifications (BTECS)

Pupils can study a Level 2 or Level 3 vocational course at post-16, so if your pupil misses their grades for the Level 3 course the option will be there for some providers to do a lower level course and work your way up. BTECs can be done at some sixth forms, but the majority of colleges offer vocational qualifications and will have a much wider range of subject options available to pupils.

To progress onto a vocational qualification, you generally need 4 or 5 GCSEs at grade 9-4 – it is important to always research the course your pupil is interested in to ensure you are clear on the entry requirements to that course. There is a great deal of variety in vocational qualifications such a Beauty, Engineering, IT, Forensic Science, Creative Media, and many more. Be sure to review the course offerings of the providers you are interested in so you have a full understanding of the academic pathways available to your pupil.

It is important to remember that a Level 3 vocational qualification is equivalent to 3 A levels, which means all pupils who complete a Level 3 qualification will be able to progress into university, if they choose, the same as a pupil who completes 3 A levels.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships give pupils the opportunity to combine paid work with education, as pupils will earn a salary while they are learning and training in a specific employment sector. That is not to say this is an easier route for pupils, as pupils will need to have well-developed time management skills in order to balance the expectations of their professional role and their learning, and it can be a longer path to a qualification. You can study a wide range of qualifications from Level 2 up to degree level – typically pupils will start on a Level 2 and progress upwards.

Apprenticeships are offered by employers directly, so you can find many of these opportunities online – www.apprenticeship.gov.uk is a great search tool to see the apprenticeships available. Apprenticeships are essentially a job, and are advertised regularly

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throughout the year – it is important that you and your pupil are actively checking for new opportunities and applying for roles that your pupil is interested in. Do not be discouraged if the first few applications are not successful – as with most job hunting, it can sometimes take a few applications before an opportunity is offered. Patience and perseverance is key.

Entry requirements to apprenticeship roles vary depending on employers and what they are looking for in a candidate. All opportunities will outline the key qualities they are looking for in a candidate as part of the job spec, so you should read this carefully with your pupil before applying.

T Levels

T Levels are now available to pupils, but not at every post-16 provider. T Levels are equivalent to 3 A levels, and are a 2-year course that will have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content of the course meets the needs of industry and prepares pupils for the world of work. They offer a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience which can help pupils develop the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.

T Levels will be available in a wide range of subjects, depending on the provider who is offering them, so it is important to do your research thoroughly.

The Central Futures team is happy to support if you have any questions about these pathways or the application process. Please contact us via email, and we can arrange a time to talk either over the phone or arrange an in-person meeting.

Ms Browne – brownec@cfbs.islington.sch.uk

Ms Shaw – shawd@cfbs.islington.sch.uk

We wish all of our GCSE pupils the best of luck in the coming months, and we look forward to seeing what decisions they make on their next steps.

Kind Regards,

The Central Futures Team

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