

MY BETHS EXPERIENCE – MUSA K

Where do I begin...to tell the story of a lifetime in a place that felt my second home. No words can express every memory, or moment we went through but I can shed light on some of the highlights. So join me in this flashback through the years of my life that made me into who I am today

YEAR 7



Year 7 is a monumental year for every student in every school and Beths certainly made it quite the experience for us. An entire academic year packed with trips and activities that got us integrated, accustomed and acquainted with each other.

I vividly remember travelling to Mountfitchet castle to dive into the history of Normans...from feeding turkeys with my bare hands to exploring to the top of the hill each moment is in my memory forever as it brought me to become friends with the people I'm around today. But the fun didn't stop there, another example would be our trip to Rochester where we searched for clues around the city and spoke with locals while running in the streets. I

may not have realised it at the time but its little things like that, that Beths offers in order to truly build character.

All of this was coupled with our academic bloom where we were thrown into an ocean of new subjects from languages where we would rotate and get a taste of each three options, to food tech making every dish imaginable. Moreover being given the right amount of freedom to conduct experiments ourselves in science for the first time was incredible (all while keeping safe of course). We saw metals burn as different colours due to the atom excitation and excess radiation – a key part of chemistry, as well cans shrink into themselves with gas pressure and even learning how colour spreads across a chromatogram with pigments: we learnt about each and every topic in a highly enjoyable practical environment where we were quite literally shown not told so that a genuine interest would spark within every student. Secondary school is a big change and its essential the early years prepare you in the correct way for your later challenges and striking the perfect balance of freedom and discipline occurs through those very gates on Hartford road.

In addition to this our wave of athleticism began from the first week where we all engaged in try outs for various sports with teams of all abilities so that everyone was involved...not to mention the dreaded yet necessary cross country run and 'bleep' test that every newcomer must face.

Our year in particular was blessed with a fine selection of numerous academy footballers at prestigious clubs such as Chelsea, Charlton, Watford, Southend, and county hockey, cricket and rugby players representing kent, along with many other athletes in individual sports that went on to represent us at national level and even captain the England team! Showcasing their talent. Sporting Ability is highly valued as it shows a level of dedication, perseverance and resilience that not everyone has; not only that but at Beths we developed such mindsets that even those who's futures were secure in sport did not neglect their

education, rather went above and beyond and achieved outstanding grades only to motivate everyone around them.

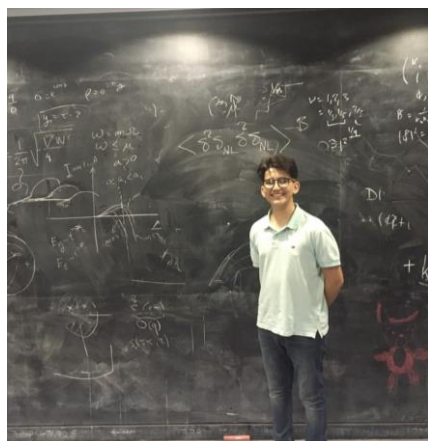
Personally I committed to the cricket team for my entire time at Beths, and we had hours and hours of laughs and game time as cricket matches are generally longer. Each member of our team remembers the tough training in the nets improving our skills in a progressively challenging environment, coupled with the sweet memory of perfect green fields where we defeated many rival schools as the summer breeze cooled & congratulated us.

As well as this sports day is something every Beths boy loves as we get to spend our time showcasing our abilities or relaxing under the sun watching our top athletes battle it out on the track and right at the end even the teachers! Which is a sight to see.

YEAR 8

Year 8 is truly the time of every student's life at Beths. By now I was settled into my environment, acquainted with the teachers and enjoying my studies. The maturity change from primary to secondary school is really visible from this point onwards and we truly got to be young adults where we were given independent tasks and responsibilities such as co-ordinating research and presentations for history with onscreen explanations to a physical scene we acted out simultaneously. It was the perfect balance as we had no direct pressured exams wise so there was a true sense of happiness every day when our year group would be together on the notorious fields and hard courts of Beths grammar, playing away while we could, what a time.

Yet that's not all, Beths culture was giving us every experience possible, we rotated between 3 different D&T subjects, in each one creating a new project for ourselves. These included



A fully functioning mechanical litter picker in product design which we had to precisely draw, then measure and cut/file adding designs using laser printers, finally connecting it all with a handle ,

Or a complete product with packaging and guides that we designed ourselves from scratch in graphics with EU regulations and branding, To a phone holder with synchronised lights in electronics which we had to code draw up, and laser cut, each one teaching us a new skill or giving us a new memory until we settled on

which one we enjoyed the most and decided to take it further.

We even enjoyed modern foreign language song competitions and performances within our year group and played kahoots in our classes to learn new vocab with beths' (controlled) bring your own phone policy.

However the true highlight of it all was undisputedly year 8 camp: a thrilling, action packed week with so much character building that no boy returned home the same! I remember vividly each activity that we participated in from night

lining where we made our way through a gruelling mud maze while being blindfolded, only guided by our partner and jumping into the river at the end, Or the challenging group cycle across the top of hills in the British countryside which left our legs depleted yet we never complained as we enjoyed it so much. While it was all fun there were also many challenges that taught us resilience and determination for example having to kayak in rainy weather and pull each other out of freezing water if we capsized! Or enduring long walks for miles and miles yet the landscape never bored us as we saw forests full of red trees or historic villages with food specialities. Each day taught us a new skill no matter what we were doing, even as far as cooking! Whether that be the day our team cooked for the whole camp or making a seasoned 2 course meal in a field full of horses...not your average experience.

Overall though what really made the experience incredible for us was the time we spent together, each night playing games in the forest such as capture the flag and returning to hot chocolate and biscuits, to whispering in the tents with your friends through the night in fear of Mr Temple catching you and making you wash dishes till the morning...



Lastly to inspire us with our upcoming start of GCSEs Mr O'reagan organised a trip for us to explore Oxford university, talk and engage in workshops with some professional as well as spark some real dreams for those such as myself who wanted to achieve the highest ranks possible, this was particularly incredible for us as we had always dreamt of reaching these places one day and were finally standing amongst what could be our future. We saw what it could be like alongside the knowledge and opportunities we would gain and its safe to say most of us put this newfound inspiration to use.

YEAR 9

Year 9 is where our lives took a big turn, yet I say that in the healthiest way possible. At the time we still did early entry GCSEs so we had finally taken one step into a potential path we may follow in life with the subject we chose. For me Economic was my first love. As a business minded person involved in may other enterprises this really was 'my cup of tea' and I still remember to this day my first lesson about the economic life cycle along with how excited we all were. When you're given the chance to do something you're passionate about ahead of those your age it really gives you a sense of motivation to achieve the best you can.



And this exactly is what our head of year Mr Mcbeth capitalised on. His incredible leadership turned a group of boys who were fresh from end of year activities into rigorous workers striving to achieve the best. The seed of hard work was planted in us from young so that as it was gradually watered by teachers challenging us and increasing the workload, we knew nothing but to get to work and make sure we

get the best 'grades 7-9' only. An intricate inter-year competitive system provided us with some healthy competition where every one of us wanted to have the best test results or coursework/folders and most importantly end of term report as the final results determined who would be part of the prestigious 'top 10%' as well as who would be leading their fellow peers and earning the rewards Mr Mcbeth provided us with.



However what really changed our mindsets was the cultural shift in our year. From just enjoyment and healthy mischief it was time to get serious; not only this but the way we all inspired each other continually. The one person putting in the extra hours in the LRC then turned into 2, then into 4, all the way until there were more of us working away in our free time than other year groups. We had a vision of success, to be the best beths has ever seen, to break records, to constantly improve ourselves, to never slack off – every single person saw the hustle around them and when even those with commitments outside of school were getting the highest possible grades it only

motivates you to do better so you can share the success. One thing I admire about Beths is the perfect balance we strike in every aspect of our school lives; being around people who have similar goals and ambitions challenges you yet keeps you grounded at the same time. We had a real community, everyone got along and we all supported and inspired each other regardless of our individual friend groups. The teachers too were aware of us not being like any other year group and made sure to cater our lessons according to this, once they saw the seriousness we left behind childish classroom happenings and went above and beyond with our work. The relationships we had built really did change our lives and equip us with values and traits that will help our lives not just in school but for years to come. Once we had solidified this, all we needed was the extra incentive, daily reminders, continuous motivation and target setting all provided

by our head of year, for example I achieved 'Boy Of The Term' on receiving my report in addition we were told about, and later given 'honours ties' as a physical sign of achievement that we could wear proudly as a senior of the school in order to inspire the younger year groups to follow in our footsteps.

One of the reasons our year was so well integrated was we were all brought closer through our experiences, one of them being vaccinated on the same day which is always entertaining amongst boys to see who can make it through, or even serious presentations given to us by elite policemen who properly warned us against the dangers and effects of knife crime, an issue highly relevant in London today.

Nevertheless there was still balance, I vividly remember leading a multiple classes of students for a day in Ms Tolhursts 'enterprise challenge' where younger students had to design, market and pitch the building of a theme park under timed conditions while competing against each other. Days like that really bring the creativity out and showcases the talent we have at Beths all while giving me a new experience and responsibility of leadership through which I learnt a lot, such as how to manage groups of people at once, how to address and instruct people while still engaging them and many logistical management skills that come with handling hundreds of items of resources in order to keep organised.

Also events like bringing in world class Olympic GB athlete Tommy Ramadan to the school gave the sportsmen a look into the future and what they could be like as well as physically showing us what sacrifice and hard work brings you as we got to touch and hold Olympic medals.

Not only this but due to all our hard work we were rewarded with a trip to Thorpe park with our entire year! It was something we all desired and our teachers made it happen, from enjoying world famous rides to getting drenched in water to even eating out in the sun, the day was a perfect breather for us that motivated us even more once we realised how far we've come.



YEAR 10

By the time we got to **year 10** there was no confusion as to what our goals were, we were on track and had to push 10x harder as every single one of our subjects now was a GCSE we had chosen and committed to, while still engaging in our schools events and responsibilities such as school council where I was representing issues that the people wanted catering to. There was obviously a priority of GCSEs now and no messing around and even those of us who may have been late to join the cultural shift were on board and making tremendous progress day by day, each student was shown a custom and personalised plan as to their targets which catered to their needs.

Our analytical skills we now put into our English content, Our experimental skills we put into our sciences, our technical skills we put into our maths work etc etc, for our entire timetable was 100% GCSEs now and there was no slacking off as one lesson wasted would be one lesson too many, and there was no room for failure!



However I would be lying if I said it didn't get tough at times. Maintaining that level of motivation for such an extended period of time can be hard, but that's where we had to help each other, remind ourselves of the end goal, provide new ways for revision and shift our routines. Not only this but our school helped us stay inspired by organising for us to attend many events. I remember our top set science class attending the examiners conference at science live where we picked up many valuable skills to apply into our exams as well as introducing new more advanced & challenging topics to us in the wider fields of medicine and astrology. Similarly I was selected to attend the

Oxbridge conference at Townley grammar school which taught me a to more about the application process and how to go about the interview phase perfectly, should I make it there (hopefully), We also met with some Oxbridge alumni and recently accepted applicants who gave us insight on how to manage GCSEs and A-Levels.

In addition to this we watched the sensational play 'wicked' at London Victoria, what a spectacle that was! The lights, sounds, acting all alongside the singing and dancing showed us the standard these professionals acted at.

While we studied all these events helped us enjoy our time and the rewards such as Gold Colours, with the schools honorary 'gold' badge engrained into Our blazers gave us a real sense of fulfilment and also responsibility as it showed us how we were moving onto bigger and better things hence had to set an example. This level of responsibility was clearly shown through school events where we would have to come back late in the evening and give tours of the school to potential future beths students, here I experienced my first successes in selling Beths as all of the families I toured said that they were unsure of whether to send their son to beths or not yet I managed to sway them towards our way of life.

Being the first person to achieve all 1s for attitude to learning and quality of work in my report really showed me the fruits of my labour and gave me a glimpse of all that I could be therefore I really felt as though these things helped us motivate each other when times got tough. In addition to this as we were becoming young adults and more independent now hence Beths made sure to provide us with the correct mentorship to gain financial literacy, we had a day with company MYBANK which came and ran workshops with us to help us understand how to save and invest our money better. Undoubtedly this helped many of us understand how to handle our assets better and think long term.

However the real experience of year 10 came in the summer of 2019. GCSES. The dreaded yet necessary exams we had to sit. It felt as though time had flew past us, only yesterday was I walking into that first lesson of economics about the economic life cycle to now being able to write fluent essays debating complex topics with justifications using modern day considerations such as socio-economic impacts as well as the effect on the broader economy. Within the blink of an eye I was in the exam hall putting pen to paper quite literally writing my future. Across the course of a months and a half we completed our RE and chosen options' exams. It was stressful but after books of notes, practise exams, mocks, late night and after school revision sessions we were prepared to go do our school and ourselves proud. The day of the first GCSE was really a sigh to see, half our year was smiling uncontrollably trying to make the most of it while others couldn't take their eyes off their flashcards in fear that they might forget a keyword, but after all was said and done we came out victorious having done all we could have, and actually feeling content which is surprisingly rare for students our age sitting exams. Yet verily we reaped our rewards on the nerve wrecking results day, I stood outside Hamburg town hall on holiday in Germany sweating profusely as I was on facetime to my mum, who with Mr Mcbeths assistance opened my results for me, and broke the news that I achieved Grade 9(A**) in both my subjects RE and Economics . I was overwhelmed with joy and so were my family. Achieving a goal you've worked so hard for is really the best feeling and I know our entire year felt that as we achieved 52% grades 7-9, we were all proud of each other and saw the effects of uplifting each others morals throughout the year.





Our year wasn't over after exams though...before results day we had the experience of DofE which gave many of us nostalgia from year 8 camp as we once again had to walk for miles and miles through the British landscape (which again showed us some mesmerising scenery) . However this time we were much more independent, we had to cook, clean, camp all by ourselves only seeking supervision and equipment from our teachers, we had to make it past various checkpoints and motivate each other while someone else may be tired. Nevertheless it seemed very tough at the time as we had had blisters on our feet from the practise day yet went on to do our official expedition a short while after, however looking back at it now, it was an amazing experience where we learnt so much about patience, bravery and teamwork while utilising the skills of navigation, map reading and cooking. Many of the memories from that fortunate day will remain with me forever, e.g being chased then cornered in a field full of angry cows and hearing my friends scared to death, all things we look back and laugh at today. DofE also enriched us with long terms values too, such as helping our community with volunteering that made us realise the impact we as individuals can have supporting a cause, or learning a new life skill, personally I learnt French which me and KJ still speak today also the importance of consistent exercise and keeping fit.





Lastly we had the 2 weeks of work experience. For me personally, it was one of the most enlightening, educational and inspiring things I've ever done in my life. Working at JP Morgan, the worlds most valuable investment bank, gave the opportunity to learn from some of the most knowledgeable people in the industry. Whether that's analysts, quantitative researchers, traders, or even auditors. Yet that wasn't all, I was given meetings with heads of all sorts of international departments who were able to guide me in the right directions to find my career path, all while teaching me complex concepts of risk management within the stock market, from the worlds top rated analysts, which I have continued to use to this day and plan

on teaching the younger students at beths. As well as this they gave me some insight as to what they show and provide their clients, in order for me to see how the institution operates. Even aside from the knowledge I gained, the change in environment let me be amongst people of the corporate world every single day, something I always wanted to experience, even working in a trading floor that exchanges hundreds of millions of pounds a day, or eating from a grand food selection with new cuisine every day for lunch, to relaxing on the top floor looking onto skyscrapers on the London skyline - all things that fuelled me with motivation. The desire to experience a life you can look back at from a high point can only be done through hard work and uplifting the others around you, therefore I really feel as though work experience filled my with so much in just two weeks that I couldn't have got from anywhere else.



YEAR 11

Year 11 was the second half of our educational marathon, a true strive for success after we'd gotten a taste of it last year. It was interesting how by this point we didn't even need to be told much. It was make it or break it, final stretch, the home run and everyone was putting in 100% , doing late nights till 6pm in school revising and attending revision classes, to early mornings getting in to practise any practical assessments you had. I was also selected to be part of the 'elite english programme' in which I engaged in Macbeth interactive workshops that allowed me to explore the context and meaning of the play more as well as Jekyll & Hyde talks.

No matter who you were, everyone was on track to achieve higher than they were expected to and we all had the dreamt to glorify the school's name against the other schools of Bexley who we know we're better than...all until that opportunity was snatch from between our hands.

But before all that I would like to reminisce on the experiences of year 11 such as playing countless hours of table tennis in a competitive environment where I improved greatly and increased skills as well as boxing more than ever to improve myself for fights outside of school hours and assessment, or going rock climbing for two days where we stretched ourselves to new heights (literally). Experiences like that were cherished by all of us especially as we knew they were the last time's we'd be together.



Aside from GCSEs there were other achievements though; across my time at Beths I've been presented the award for English as well as general excellence in the annual school prize giving, in addition, I know some of the roles that may be available in sixth form as I was a junior prefect. I hope to pursue these to the highest level in order to mentor and help the younger years as well as inspire others how I was inspired; for example I gave an assembly this year on an inspirational sportsperson which many young people may be aware of hence the message may resonate with them more. To add, I was proud to have been selected to help younger students with their education and made sure I did by best to guide them in the best direction possible while uplifting their experience. The sudden & abrupt ending to the year as well as secondary school as a whole was heart-breaking to say the least. I remember sitting in Mr Mcbeth's room late in the evening revising as he walks in and tells us schools are closed; I was overjoyed as I thought I'd have an extended study leave but as he was reading the

article there was a sudden pause... 'oh' he uttered, as we stared at him confused only for him to break the news that would change our lives forever: 'GCSEs and A-Levels have been cancelled'. My hands went onto my head as my jaw dropped in disbelief, I stood up speechless as it slowly dawned on me that everything I'd been working towards for the last few years of my life slipped out from beneath me. The next day as per government instructions we were sent home and a real sense of emptiness was felt amongst all of us, a family going separate ways all in the space of a day. Hopefully we get the chance to have a last day with the correct send off but, but in the end we've come out with a lot more than just subject content, rather learnt a lot of valuable skills such as my work ethic, balance in lifestyle, public speaking, time management, and determination that'll help me all throughout my life



YEAR 10/11

As for the future I would like to be the best head boy Beths grammar has seen, providing the people of the school with incredible experiences, competitions and inspiration to carry on our traditions and help students with their exams and school life, as well as assisting and managing events and ceremonial roles where I can really sell the school and show parents of young kids all that their child could be, and most importantly helping them see the importance of hard/smart work, just as I was shown. Also I would like to achieve top grades in my A levels of business, maths and economics while continuing to network with people in my desired career industry and expand other business ventures. The end goal is to reach a prestigious university such as Cambridge that will provide me with a great degree and many opportunities.

My advice for younger students would be to:

- Develop your community within your year group and make sure you all get along because trust me, those are the people and the years you remember
- Participate in extra curricular's and broaden your horizon to make yourself as experienced and valuable as possible
- Develop a desire within to achieve, and share & showcase it with your people once everyone does as and you see others working, you too are motivated to put the effort in and succeed
- Inspire each other to be better, don't let any of your bros slack off
- But in the end have your fun, balance out the work correctly and don't take everything too seriously, up until its time to do so