



1st September, 2021

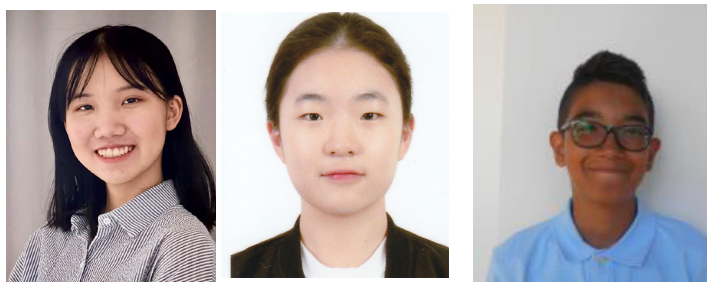
UPCOMING EVENTS...

September

- 1st - Classteacher Parent Zooms (Primary)
- 2nd - Mentor Parent Zooms (Secondary)
- 6th-10th - CAT Testing Week (Y4, Y7, Y10, Y12) (postponed)
- 4th October - Settling in parents conference evening for all new students and all Y7, Y10, Y11, Y12 & 13

UNIVERSITY AND EXAMINATION NEWS

Following impressive examination results this year, our students have all gained access to their university of choice - though some are taking a gap year and starting at university next year. This is celebration enough, but what makes this even better is the amount of university scholarship offered to BIST students. The average scholarship amount across all our graduating students (i.e total scholarship awards divided by number of graduating students) was the equivalent of a massive **US\$28,000** per student - an unprecedented amount in all my 22 years in international education. This is a testament to the hard work of the students and good results achieved, but also to the non-academic aspects of the BIST programme that makes our students more attractive to global universities. In terms of exam results, 25% of the grades that our graduates achieved were at A* or A. We must congratulate all the students, but a special mention must go to Elly who scored a 'full house' of **FOUR A* GRADES** and has received a **GLOBAL EXCEPTIONAL SCHOLARS AWARD** to assist with her fees at the University of Warwick. Our top performer in Year 12 in AS Level examinations was our co-Head Girl, Melissa, with a 'full house' of **FOUR A GRADES** (there is no A* grade at AS Level). Our Year 11 students achieved the school's best ever set of IGCSE results with 55% of grades at A* or A. The top performer in Year 11, with **EIGHT A* GRADES AND ONE A GRADE**, was Adam.



"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes. Including you."

Anne Lamott

Dear Parents

Welcome to the first edition of *The Roar* for 2021-22!

The academic year has started and it has been fantastic to see the students in classes getting to know their new friends and teachers, new routines and starting the learning process for the school year. As you will probably be aware, the government has indicated that schools must remain off campus until 4th October. This means we are proceeding with online learning until that date. We have therefore decided to move the October Half Term from 11th to 15th October to the 27th September to 1st October. This will avoid a return to school for a week and then a week of holiday. Information on online learning programmes will be shared by class teachers and mentors. Please look out for emails from them about this.

IMPORTANT LETTERS

Prior to the start of the school year, we sent out two important letters regarding arrangements for the school. I have linked the letters here [Start of the Academic Term Letter](#) and [Keeping BIST a COVID safe environment letter](#). It is very important that parents do read them.

VACCINATION STATUS

In last week's letter, we asked parents to complete our vaccination survey. It is important that parents do this. Thank you very much to those parents who have already completed the survey. If you have not yet completed it, [here is the link](#) to the survey. Please complete this by Friday - it only takes a few minutes.

VOLUNTARY STUDENT TESTING

We are very fortunate to have a very supportive COVID testing partner in LabUnno who have been administering our mandatory staff testing. They have offered to run voluntary testing for students on a weekly basis. This process started today. Parents can register for 4 week blocks of testing and the registration survey remains active even for parents who missed this week's testing deadline and have testing for 4 weeks from the next week we are in school. The registration can be found [here](#).

NEW STAFF WELCOME!

August has seen us welcome a number of new staff to BIST and I hope that soon you will be able to meet them and welcome them personally. Until such a time, unfortunately you will only be able to see their photos or meet them virtually.

Our new team members are: Mr. Beka Burchuladze (Y5T LSA), Ms. Ellie Dawson (Head of MFL), Ms. Lucy Hawkins (Y2 teacher), Ms. Lauren Krasnoff (Humanities & Science teacher), Ms. Irma Lavit (French & Russian teacher), Ms. India Madiseti (English & Media teacher), Ms. Solmaz Memarbashli (Y4D LSA), Ms. Tsira Mgelashvili (Y1/2 LSA), Mr. Andrew Morris (Head of Maths), Mr. Lawrence Parnes (Science teacher), Ms. Tamar Partsuania (Foundation 1 LSA), Mr. Shayan Saatian (KS1 LSA), Mr. David Swanson (Maths teacher), Ms. Naili Vakhania (Art teacher) and Ms. Maia Vakhtangishvili (Y6V LSA). Our new EAL teacher, Mr. Amila Jayasooriya, will be joining us shortly, but due to COVID issues is currently stuck in Sri Lanka.



We also welcome back Ms. Tina Kapanadze and Ms. Pati Saltkhutsishvili back from maternity leave; Mr. Adam Whybro returning from compassionate leave; and Ms. Martha May covering for Ms. Midelashvili who is on compassionate leave. After successfully completing his internship with BIST whilst studying at the Georgian University of Sport, we also welcome Mr. Sandro Shanidze officially to the team. Congratulations go to Ms. Mariam Khalatashvili, one of our KS1 learning supports, who gave birth to a baby boy last week.

BUILDING PROGRAMME

The building of an additional block on our current site is well underway. Over the summer, most of the 'noisy and dirty' work was done, so we do hope for little of this type of disruption. To ensure safety we have created a cordon around the site which means that, until the major structural work is complete, a small section of our football pitch, the amphitheatre and part of the car park cannot be used. We are very excited about the new building which will offer some great new teaching spaces, labs, theatre and a new large Sixth Form Centre. The new building will principally be used for secondary classes, but primary students will be using the theatre and be able to visit the laboratories for special sessions as they do now.

PARENT COMMUNITY NEWS

As many of you are aware, we have a very active Parent Community Association. Unfortunately, some of our Class Parent Representatives moved away from Georgia over the summer holiday and the Parent Community is seeking volunteers to act as Class Parent Reps that liaise with parents in their class and/or 'Nationality' Reps who liaise with parents from their national group. If you are interested, please contact the PCA secretary, Vania by email. Please also complete the Parent-to-Parent Contact survey shared last week if you have not already done so. Please also see the letter from the Parent Community attached to the newsletter mailout.



Join us on Instagram!

[@bistbilisi.ge](https://www.instagram.com/bistbilisi.ge)

Mr. Stephen Priest
Principal

Ms. Alexandra Backhouse
Vice Principal & Head of Primary

Mr. Adam Whybro
Head of Secondary

Mr. Alex Timmis
EYKS1 Coordinator

Mr. Simon Rooney
KS2 Coordinator

Mr. James Miller
KS3 Coordinator

Ms. Sadie Rodea
KS4 Coordinator

Mr. Les Pemberton
Head of Sixth Form

Ms. Tumika Sthapit
Head of Administration

Ms. Sophie Kasrashvili
PA to the Principal

Ms. Tamuna Skhiereli
Office & Resource Manager

