



BEST People

Growing
the BEST
in everyone



700+

members
of staff



15

schools & nurseries
(and a central shared services team)

ONE



#BESTfamily



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WELCOME TO BEST

Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) is not only one of the biggest employers in the area, it's also a great place to work.

We're proud of the special ethos that runs through our family of schools, nurseries and central shared services team.

We are driven by our values: to always put children first, to collaborate with each other in order to add value, to provide community-based provision and

to be compassionate.

We share a vision to grow the BEST in everyone – and that includes our staff.

Our aim of providing an outstanding education to our young people can only happen if we recruit, retain and develop the highest quality workforce.

And we want to make sure the high-quality people we employ feel valued in the workplace,

whichever part of the BEST family they work.

As a single employer, we are able to offer all our staff a fantastic range of benefits.

This includes an excellent working environment, great opportunities for career development and training, and discounts and deals that will help save you money.

This booklet summarises the range of benefits on offer to you as a member of staff at BEST.

They range from general terms and conditions, including pensions, annual leave and sick pay, to offers that go over and above, such as the Cycle to Work Scheme and money off cinema tickets.

Read on to find out more!



* All benefits and offers described in this brochure were correct at time of publication (first published in November 2021, digital version updated in June 2022).

For more details about any of the benefits please contact your local HR assistant.



HR AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

We offer a comprehensive range of employment benefits to staff.

While some are relevant to all, other terms and conditions are determined by whether you work for our schools and central team, or at one of our nurseries.

● Pensions –

BEST schools/central team staff are automatically enrolled (*subject to minimum earnings threshold*) into the relevant public sector plan: the Teachers' Pension Scheme or the Local Government Pension Scheme.



BEST Nurseries staff are enrolled into workplace pension plan The People's Pension.

● Annual Leave –

We operate according to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) in relation to the working time of teaching staff.

School support/central team staff are entitled to:

- Up to five years' continuous service – **24 days**

- Completion of five years' continuous service – **29 days**

- Completion of 10 years' continuous service – **31 days**

(* Term Time Only staff have their 'holiday pay' built into their salary)

BEST Nurseries staff receive **20 days** paid holiday entitlement.

Staff are also entitled to the designated bank holidays in England and Wales.

● Sick Pay –

If you are unfortunately off work ill, all employees receive any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)



allowances you are entitled to.

BEST schools/central team staff also receive occupational sick pay for a given period of time based on your length of service (refer to the BEST Sickness Absence Policy for details).

● Eye tests –

If display screen equipment use is a regular part of your work, you may be eligible for an eye test and glasses every two years.

● Family-friendly policies –

We help you and your family with support including

enhanced maternity and adoption benefits, shared parental leave and flexible working arrangements.

Full details can be found in our suite of HR policies, which can be found in the information section on Smartlog.

● Childcare –

Employees can access on-site childcare at our three BEST Nurseries (**subject to availability*).

● Parking –

There is free on-site parking across most of our sites.



DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER

Our staff are at the very heart of the BEST success story – and we have a strong track record of giving ambitious employees the opportunities to flourish.

Whether it be in the form of continuing professional development (CPD), providing the chance to collaborate with colleagues across the trust or simply encouraging you to reach your personal goals, BEST is committed to supporting you.

● CPD courses and training –

Our BEST Education Services and School Improvement team invests heavily in an extensive range of high-quality courses for teaching and support staff.

Some are fully funded by the trust, with others available to schools and nurseries at generously discounted rates.

Find out further details at www.bestteachingschool.org.uk

Our responsibility is to invest in our people and bring out the BEST in everyone

● Leaders of the future –

Whether you're taking your first steps into leadership or simply aspire to be the best in your field, you can climb the career ladder at BEST.

The School Improvement team has a range of programmes on its Leadership Ladder and also offers shadowing opportunities across the trust, available to all.

● Apprenticeship Levy –

BEST is able to access Apprenticeship Levy funds to pay for the training element of 'approved' apprenticeships.

We have a number of staff who are gaining qualifications and experience via this route.

Please enquire at your school/ workplace to find out more.

● Mindfulness –

We are establishing a culture of mindfulness at BEST, and will provide development training to any member of staff who wishes to take up the offer.

Over 100 employees have already taken advantage to expand their knowledge, such as on courses run in conjunction with the Mindfulness in Schools Project.



SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT

Supporting staff wellbeing has always been a priority at BEST.

The significant challenges we have all experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic has brought this into even greater focus.

We have adopted wellbeing charters across the trust, with the core aims of helping staff to maintain healthy work-life balances and have manageable workloads.

We are in the process of creating wellbeing gardens at our schools, which will provide a calm and quiet space area to reflect and regather.

We also provide to all staff free access to the Employee Assistance Programme offered by Education Support, the UK's only charity which provides mental health and wellbeing support to everyone working in education.

The programme provides a package of emotional and



practical support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including:

- **Counselling –**

A range of options including telephone, face-to-face or online sessions with independent counsellors for both work and home-related issues.

- **Coaching –**

A dedicated coaching service for line managers, aimed at developing soft skills and building confidence for handling challenging situations.

**Free, confidential support,
information and advice
available 24/7 all year round**



- **Online resources –**

Access to online health and wellbeing resources and a specialist information service.

Content is updated daily and includes current news, webinars and audio and video clips on personal and workplace topics.

Speak to your line manager or HR lead for login details.

- **Professional support –**

Financial, legal and practical support on a range of personal issues from qualified experts and professionals.

at a glance

**Need help? Call 08000 856 148 or visit
educationsupport.org.uk/onlinesupport**



AND SOME ADDED EXTRAS...

Work-life balance is important for us all.

That is why we strive to provide additional benefits to help our staff adopt a healthier lifestyle or save a few pennies. Or both!

● Leisure centre discount –

BEST employees can access a preferential membership rate of £21 a month plus a half-price joining fee at the Pendleton

Sports Centre, which is located at Etonbury Academy in Arlesey and operated by Stevenage Leisure Ltd (SLL).

You are also eligible for a corporate membership rate at other SLL centres across Central Bedfordshire.

For full details call the Pendleton Centre on 01462 341114 or email enquiries.pendleton@sll.co.uk – don't forget to mention where you work!

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Only
£21
per month

HALF PRICE
JOINING
FEE!

BEST Bedfordshire Schools Trust

Our corporate membership offers a range of activities for BEST employees to keep fit, including gym and workout classes.

Standard membership is £31 per month - SAVING you £10
Take advantage of this discount and join today !

lifestyles
at pendleton

PENDLETON SPORTS CENTRE
Stotfold Road, Arlesey, Bedfordshire, SG15 6XS
01462 341 114 enquiries.pendleton@sll.co.uk

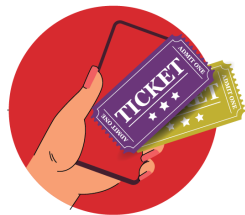
SLL find us online: www.sll.co.uk

How To Save With **THE CINEMA SOCIETY.**



Search by cinema chain or by location

You can also search by cheapest, or largest saving



Select your vouchers – Adult/Child/Annual Pass*

Order up to 10 tickets (every 24 hours), so don't forget family & friends! They are normally valid for at least 6 months



Add food and drink**

Popcorn, drinks, and snack boxes



Use your vouchers to book tickets online or in cinema

Show the email at the box office, or input the codes if booking online (Special/Voucher code)



Get your vouchers instantly

Get your vouchers instantly via email or view them on the Previous Orders page of the site



Proceed to our secure checkout

We have multiple payment options including major credit/debit cards



Enjoy your movie, safe in the knowledge it's cost you less!

We save you money in 500+ cinemas, including all the major chains

Follow The Cinema Society on to stay updated with our latest news and offers

We're here to help, contact us at

cinemasocietyclub@wearespark.com

THE CINEMA SOCIETY.

● Cycle to Work Scheme –

This salary sacrifice scheme enables you to purchase a bike and/or accessories to use for your commute to work, and save on your tax and National Insurance contributions.

Visit www.cyclescheme.co.uk to get started.

(NB, the value of equipment ordered per BEST employee is limited to £1,000.)

● Cheaper cinema tickets –

BEST has teamed up with The Cinema Society, which offers discounted prices for tickets and refreshments at all the major cinema chains and many local independents across the UK.

As well as trips to the cinema, the offer also includes a Big Night In package comprising a 'make your own' artisan pizza kit, popcorn and a code to rent or stream a movie at home.

To get started, simply visit www.cinemasocietyclub.com and set up a free account using



your @bestacademies.org.uk email address.

If you do not have a BEST email address you can still sign up – contact your local HR assistant for your unique access code.

We are always looking to add to the perks available for staff. If you have any suggestions, please let our central team know!

did you know?

Working in the education sector (whatever your role) means you're eligible for the money-saving deals and vouchers available at www.discountsforteachers.co.uk



**BEST House, Shefford Road, Clifton, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5QS**

01462 811519
info@bestacademies.org.uk
www.bestacademies.org.uk



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Bedfordshire Schools Trust