

Dear Parents and Carers

I have some brilliant news regarding our school playing fields at Stoke Lodge; I am delighted to announce that students will be returning to the fields very soon! Please see our press release below

30 November 2018 - Press Release Cotham School Playing Fields at Stoke Lodge
The Headteacher and Governors at Cotham School are pleased to release this statement to advise Bristol City residents of the facts and up to date information regarding Stoke Lodge Playing fields.

We are delighted to announce that students will be returning to the school playing fields at Stoke Lodge very soon. Students have not been able to use the sports fields since 2014.

Having previously used the playing fields, in 2011 Cotham School entered into a long lease with Bristol City Council for the playing fields as part of the schools academisation requirements. This means the school is entitled to exercise control over its playing fields and their use for education and other sports activities. Our responsibilities include the maintenance of the land and ensuring that it is fit for purpose.

As an academy, the school is solely responsible for the steps that it deems necessary to protect the health and safety of students and staff. The school will now therefore erect a perimeter fence and replace the worn out sports pavilion.

We have worked with Bristol City Council on this and they have confirmed the following:
'The sports fields DO NOT fall within the curtilage of the listed Stoke Lodge building. As a result any enclosure would benefit from normal permitted development rights.'

And

'The school does not require the council's consent as landlord should the school wish to proceed with its proposals to erect a fence at Stoke Lodge playing fields'

The school will now begin its planned improvements to the site. The first phase of these improvements will include the remarking of the sports pitches and the erection of the perimeter fence. We then hope to build a new pavilion; this is currently the subject of a planning appeal. The pavilion will enhance the enjoyment and participation in sports lessons and extra-curricular activities for Cotham students and also for grass roots sports clubs who will now return to the sports fields.

The school has secured financial support in the form of a grant from the Education Skills Funding Agency to assist with the cost of the fence and new pavilion. Moving forward, we would welcome enquiries from clubs who may wish to lease these facilities in the near future

Should any member of the public have an enquiry regarding our Playing Fields at Stoke Lodge this should be directed only to Cotham School to answer.

Ms Jo Butler
Headteacher