

# Birchwood NEWS

## MESSAGE FROM MR GRIFFIN

I was reminded recently that it is just over a year since I first visited Birchwood with a thought of applying to lead the school. A lot has happened over the last year, and it is hard to think I have been Principal here for two terms (I'm not sure if it seems much longer or much shorter). When I first visited there was a roundabout at the end of Dunmow Road and the frustrations of roadworks were yet to come. One thing that has remained constant throughout this period has been the rich and diverse range of opportunities that are available to Birchwood students.

This edition of Birchwood News captures that dynamic element of what life at Birchwood is like. In this edition you will read about celebrating success in music and sport. You will discover the range of opportunities our students have had including visits from local businesses and from TV personalities, and the visits they have been involved in away from school. These include a week of events looking at Science, a range of trips to London and our half term Ski trip for the Sixth Form. You will read about students competing in sports away from school and the range of awareness and charity work that we have.



There is a view of education in some setting which suggests that the only important thing in a school is the quality of exam outcomes. There is no doubt that exams are an essential component of what we do but a school without the rich range of activities captured here is one that is not fully developing young people and not reflecting their wider development. I am proud to have joined a school where these experiences are both valued and encouraged. I would like to congratulate everyone who has been involved in any of the events in Birchwood News. I hope you have enjoyed the experience and that you feel you have developed as a consequence. I would like to extend my public thanks to all of the staff here who give tirelessly of their time to lead these opportunities and also to the parents and carers who support their children to participate in these.

We are in the final stages of preparing Years 11 and 13 for their GCSE and A level exams in May and June. Both year groups are exceptionally well focused at the moment and are making the most of the remaining time they have with us. As a school, we look forward to supporting them through the exam season and to celebrating with them on their results days in the summer.

The approach of exams also sees us saying goodbye to our current Student Leadership Team in the Sixth Form. They have been a truly exceptional group of students and it has been a real pleasure to work with them. I thank them for all that they have done to improve the student experience during their time at Birchwood and I wish them every success and happiness in the future.

The end of the Easter term does not typically see much change in staffing. Mr Stock is stepping away from his role as Head of Year 9 and I would like to thank him for all that he has done in his years as a pastoral leader. We aren't losing Mr Stock and are delighted that we can make even more use of him in Music. After Easter we will be welcoming back Miss Munro and she will be looking after Year 9 as their Head of Year.

I wish you all a relaxing and peaceful Easter break unless you are in Years 11 and 13 in which case I hope you find lots of time to revise!

*Sam Griffin*  
Principal

# YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

We had a wonderful evening of music at the final of Birchwood's Young Musician Competition 2024. The competition is now in its 10th year and the final was judged by Mr Peter Foster, Head of Bishop's Stortford Music School. All our musicians performed brilliantly. The range of talent on display was inspiring and the final included solo performances on flute, piano, voice, heavy metal guitar and acoustic guitar. We would like to thank all students who entered the competition, the quality of entries made deciding the overall finalists exceedingly difficult, and many thanks to Peter Foster for judging the final and to Mr Stock for accompanying.



## JUNIOR PIANO

**Winner: Amelia Bush**

*No Surprises*, Radiohead  
 Josie Kay  
*Nuvole Bianche*, Ludovico Einaudi  
 Luke Sones  
*Hall of Fame*, The Script  
 Finnley Aitken  
*I'm Not The One*, Sam Smith



## POP AND ROCK

**Winner: Lucas Berry**

*Far Beyond the Sun*, Yngwie Malmsteen  
 Kieren Mok  
*Flowers*, Nito  
 Lilyah Godden  
*All I Ask*, Adele  
 Katie Leslie  
*I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free*, Nina Simone  
 Imogen Ficken  
*The Trooper*, Iron Maiden  
 Will Chandler  
*I Felt Your Shape*, Phil Elverum



## CLASSICAL

**Winner: Jacob Lei**

*Piano Sonata No.12 Mov.1*, Mozart  
 Molly Range  
*Andante in C*, Mozart  
 Phoenix Stacey  
*May Be*, Yiruma  
 Matthew Reader  
*Romantic Flight from How to Train Your Dragon*, John Powell  
 Lauren Gore  
*The Heart Asks Pleasure First*, Michael Nyman



## MUSICAL THEATRE

**Winner: Sydney Godden**

*You'll Be Back*, Hamilton  
 Aimee Suttle  
*I'd Give My Life For You*, Miss Saigon  
 Olivia Thake  
*Burn*, Hamilton  
 Stanley Curran  
*Once Upon a December*, Anastasia  
 Max Wildman-King  
*Alive*, Jekyll & Hyde  
 Sophie Springham  
*Home*, Beetlejuice  
 Milly Blackery  
*Thank you for the Music*, ABBA  
*Mama Mia*



Thank you to those who entered the first round:  
 Luke Thorpe (Pop), Piper Sweet Heals (Pop), Max Cheung (Classical),  
 Alex Bond (Pop), Josie Kay (Classical), Emilie Klumpler (Pop),  
 Kvitoslava Vorobei (Pop), Neala Goddard- Bird (Musical Theatre).

Mr Grogan, Head of Music

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## UNCOLLECTED GCSE AND GCE CERTIFICATES

The Exams Office still has over 100 uncollected certificate envelopes from the Summer 23 exam season. These certificates are important documents and may be required by academic organisations and/or future employers. Exam Boards charge a minimum of £50 for each replacement certificate. Uncollected certificates are retained for 12 months, after which, as per JCQ guidance, they may be securely destroyed.

Please contact either Mrs Bothwell, [lbothwell@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:lbothwell@birchwoodhigh.org.uk) or, Miss Korosevska, [kkorosevska@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:kkorosevska@birchwoodhigh.org.uk) to make arrangements to collect these documents.  
*Mrs Lee Bothwell, Examinations Officer*



## SCHOOL UNIFORM SUPPLIERS UPDATE

Following the closure of Fosters Schoolwear the school, along with the other BSET schools, has been overwhelmed with alternative suppliers wishing to take over uniform supply. Fortunately, we have already had E-Squared working with the school over the last 2 years and will continue to provide school uniform going forward.

Rather than each of the uniform suppliers touting for the business to each of the schools, Birchwood organised a Uniform Supplier Day with The Bishop's Stortford High School, Herts & Essex, Hockerill, Leventhorpe and Birchwood. All interested suppliers had to fill out a pre-qualification document ahead of the supplier day and from the 16 suppliers who applied 11 were invited to the school to present their business case, provide an overview of how they would provide excellent customer service to the school community and provide an indication on the pricing structure for the core items of the school uniform. Each school was able, from these presentations, to select which suppliers they would like to enter into more detailed conversations with.

Birchwood selected 2 suppliers, Uniform4Kids & Khalsa, and has subsequently held detailed conversations with both companies. Both appeared to have the financial backing to enable the initial investment required to add our school to their existing portfolio, had the knowledge to be able to source all of the uniform components from the various manufacturers and be in a position to start supplying the school from July 24.

Neither of the suppliers has a retail outlet in Bishop's Stortford and they both work on the model of doing "pop up" shops at the school at pre-determined dates and the remainder via online ordering with the potential of either delivery to the school (FOC) or to a home address (at a set delivery charge). The decision from the School and the Governing Body is to appoint Khalsa as joint supplier of the school uniform along with E-Squared and further information will be released once all of the details have been agreed with Khalsa. The pricing looks to be very similar to the current E-Squared offering.

*Mr Bull, Finance Director*

## THE RED BOX

Any student who requires period products at short notice, can go to Reception and ask for the Red Box.

*Mrs Cook, Receptionist*

# TERM DATES

## Summer Term 2024

Monday 15 April – Friday 19 July

Half Term:

W/B Monday 27 May – Friday 31 May

## CPD Days

Monday 22 July

Tuesday 23 July (Occasional Day)

## Autumn Term 2024

Monday 2 September 2024 –

Friday 20 December 2024

Half Term

W/B Monday 28 October -

Friday 1 December

## Please Note

Monday 2 September: CPD Day - no students

Tuesday 3 September: Years 7 & 12 only

Wednesday 4 September: Whole School to attend

Please note that the school is closed to students on all CPD days, unless a member of staff has asked students to attend.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

I am Mrs Young, the parental and student contact in relation to all income for the school.

We use an online payment system, ParentPay, for administration of the school income. If you require ParentPay login details or have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me via email:

[jyoung@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:jyoung@birchwoodhigh.org.uk)



Congratulations to Mrs R Newton from our Reception Team, who raised over £600 for Great Ormond Street Hospital by completing 100km (plus a victory lap) on her treadmill throughout February.

Fancy donating? Here's link:  
<https://bit.ly/435EsHA>

# HEARTSTOPPER

As part of the LGBT+ History Month celebrations Mr Harlow invited *Heartstopper* actress Corinna Brown to speak to Fusion students. Corinna, who plays Tara Jones in the series, met with students for a Q&A session about her career and how she became the famous *Heartstopper* actress she is today. She shared tips about starting a career in acting, the challenges of being an actress, as well as details of her “big break” and how her training prepared her for the profession.

She provided insight into how she learns lines for the show - often physically acting out the script as she is learning it. Corinna then very kindly stayed behind to sign books, rainbow flags and to pose for pictures with those in attendance.



Mr Harlow, FUSION



**elevate**  
education

We were pleased to welcome leading study skills company Elevate Education to the school. All Year 11s attended two workshops, ‘Ace your Exams’ and ‘Time Management’, where they were given a plethora of tips and strategies to make their revision in the lead up to their final exams as effective as possible. The workshops were very well received by the students, with the presenters complimenting the behaviour of the group. Well done, Year 11!

Mr Clift, Head of Year 11

# PARENTS GO BACK TO SCHOOL



The Birchwood Maths Faculty recently welcomed parents at their annual Back to School event. Year 7 and 8 parents experienced an insight into some of the topics taught and methods used with our KS3 students. They even had a chance to practise and show us their skills. For the first time, we also ran a session for KS4 parents. This included information on the tiers of paper, a list of content covered and suggested methods for maths revision. We hope to have given everyone who attended a clear idea about what their child should be revising at home and how they can use a range of websites to effectively prepare for assessments. Thank you to those who came!

*Miss Bull, Head of Maths*

*"I attended this event it was fantastic. Really helped me to understand how maths is taught now and how best to support my daughter with her homework. Well done and thanks to all involved"*  
*Birchwood Parent*

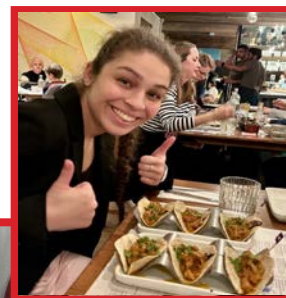
## Modern Foreign Languages

Earlier this term, we took our A level Spanish students into London to watch *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* (The House of Bernarda Alba), written by, arguably Spain's most famous playwright, Federico García Lorca at the Cervantes Theatre. We enjoyed Mexican food, expanding the students' culinary repertoire further still and Mrs Fowell joined us too!

The students will write an analytical essay on the play in their final exams, so it was a great opportunity to be able to see it in person to get a full understanding of staging, character portrayal and the nuances of speech and movement.

Without subtitles, it was a truly immersive experience. Bernarda is a formidable character and the desire for freedom from the all-female cast was cleverly conveyed. The fact that we were able to watch this impressive piece 88 years after it was written is testament to its power and significance today.

*Miss Roderick, Head of MFL.*



# NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK and NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK 2024



## BUSINESS ADVICE FROM GILL TURNER

Year 13 Single and Double Business students welcomed guest speaker Gill Turner (Chair of Governors) to Birchwood. Gill spoke to students about her experiences owning a tax advice business and gave tips for any aspiring business owners. She also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of being a business owner and emphasised the importance of gaining experience prior to owning a business. There were practical advice on correctly pricing products and services compared to the rest of the market in order to gain clients.

I'm sure I speak for both classes when I say the discussion was a very useful experience. As well as being very informative for going into business outside of school, it was funny and enjoyable too.  
Thank you, Gill!

*Sydney Godden, Year 13 student.*

## ENTREPRENEURS SHARE THEIR JOURNEY

Year 12 Business students had the privilege of listening to entrepreneurs, Anna and Vini Watson, who shared their incredible journey of building a multi-million pound business called Touch in their twenties. Their advice was truly inspiring. There were two particular pieces that stuck with me. Firstly, never give up, no matter how challenging things may seem. This principle is not only crucial in the business world but also in our personal lives. The obstacles we encounter shape our character and strength. The second piece of advice that stood out to me was to take things one step at a time and not worry about everything at once. It's okay to ask for assistance along the way, and striving for progress and growth instead of perfection is key. These words of wisdom have motivated me to keep pushing forward and never lose sight of my goals.

*Raya Kostadinova,  
Year 12 student*



## RYANAIR VISITS BIRCHWOOD #NAW24

It is not all Pilots and Cabin Crew...

With Stansted Airport on our doorstep, many of our students go on to work in the aviation sector. So, we were delighted to invite Ryanair into school to speak about the career opportunities the airline can offer.

Lola Hall presented to a group of Year 11 and Year 13 students who had expressed an interest in aviation engineering. The students learnt about the Ryanair Apprenticeship Programme, created for individuals to obtain the qualifications that they require to become a licensed Engineer (see vacancy listing here - <https://careers.ryanair.com/search/#job/987225E629>)



We also welcomed Chloe and Harry to speak to Year 12 about the full range of apprenticeships and job roles that Ryanair offer. As Ryanair is expanding its operation at Stansted there are likely to be plenty more opportunities with this local employer in the years to come.

*Mrs Crimes, Careers Leader*



## LOVE ISLAND'S RON HALL VISITS!

On Friday 8 March, Birchwood welcomed TV personality Ron Hall. Hall came second on Series 9 of Love Island and has continued to build a career as a social media Influencer ever since. He talked to students from Year 9, 10 and 12 about the reality of being a social media influencer, his time on *Love Island*, his previous work as an independent financial advisor and the hard truth about being a content creator and the impact this has had on his mental health. The students gained an excellent insight into the negative side of the social media industry and the façade it can create about people's lives. The talk was well received by both students and staff and acted as an important reminder about the dangers of social media.

*Miss Dale, Business*



# SCIENCE WEEK



Last week, Birchwood celebrated the 30th Anniversary of British Science Week with a week of events, speakers and trips.

Monday saw special guest speaker, Daniel English, from Airbus Defence and Space discuss his involvement in the Mars Rover Project and the building of a new satellite used to measure anti-climate changes.

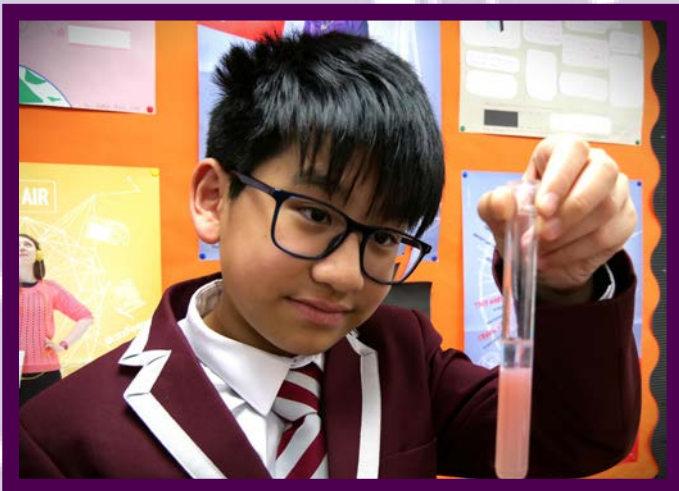
A team of Stem Ambassadors visited from Charles River to take part in a hands on practical experiment with Year 10 involving DNA extraction. While Year 7 and 8 had the chance to experiment with paper speed boats. They raced them across water powered by soap and learnt how soap affects the way that the water molecules stay together.

Miss LaLonge took a group of budding scientists to Herts and Essex for the annual Big Bang Competition. The students made Birchwood proud with 2 out of the 3 groups winning awards (more information opposite).

Lastly, Year 9 visited the Science Museum in London. They had the chance to explore the world of Science through displays and interactive exhibitions.

Thank you to all our staff and students who made the week such a success!

*Mr Cusumano, Science*



*Exploring strawberry DNA!*



*Daniel English, from Airbus Defence and Space.*



*Soap boats and roller coasters.*





## THE BIG BANG FAIR

We took our Science Club students to Herts and Essex for the annual Big Bang Fair over Science Week. I am so proud of all the students as they conquered their fears of speaking to strangers, gained confidence in themselves and proved Birchwood proud! We had three stalls, and 2 out of the 3 won awards. Congratulations to all the students below!

*Miss LaLonge, Science*



### **Group 1-**

The candle jar vacuum won best communicator!  
Evie Bateman  
Lizzie Romney  
Henry Freeborn

### **Group 2-**

Hot air engine won most innovative project!  
Dylan Crouch  
Andrew Lanzotti  
Rory Homer  
Matthew Clark

### **Group 3-**

Model Rockets did all the work themselves with no help from a staff member!  
Freddie Harvey  
Vivian Carey  
Alfie Cates  
Dom Cecil



## ELSENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL VISIT

On Wednesday 13 March, I was a guest teacher at Elsenham Primary School where I brought some secondary school circuit equipment for the students in Year 4 and Year 6 to explore.

The students had a lesson on how circuits work, circuit symbols and components to a circuit. The students at Elsenham enjoyed the science week lesson greatly and learnt a lot over the day.

*Miss LaLonge, Science*



# THE SCIENCE MUSEUM



## THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

Year 9's have been studying the circulatory system. Recently they dissected a heart which they excelled at. Every student in Mr Loveday's class were really interested and engaged thoroughly with the activity. Well done!

*Mr Loveday, Science*



## PRE-LOVED TRAINERS

A consignment of two big boxes of pre-loved trainers weighing 70 kg was shipped to Kenya. Thank you to the students and parents at Birchwood for supporting Mrs de Graaf in this fundraiser event to support the children of Mahinga primary school in rural Kenya.

Birchwood High School already supports children at this school by donating stationery and contributions towards a feeding programme for the most vulnerable children.

A special thank you goes to Birchwood Reporter's Club for their fundraising efforts through a bake sale.

Thanks so much for your donations.

*Mrs de Graaf*

## HOUSE REWARDS DAY

On Monday 25 March, we hosted the Year 7 - 13 rewards event for students. The rewards event was an inflatable assault course and a last man standing inflatable activity.

In order for students to be able to attend the event, they had to be within the top 20% of the year group in terms of their net house points (house points vs behaviour points). These events were chosen by the students, and they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thank you to all the House Captains who also helped to run this event.

*Mrs Collyer, Head of House*



On Thursday 21 March, Year 9 Drama Students (accompanied by a few Year 10 and 11's) went to see *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* at the Peacock Theatre, London. For some students this was their first theatre experience and visit to London. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and we left with the catchy songs on repeat in our heads. The show is a feel good musical about 'Jamie New', a Year 11 school student who doesn't quite fit in. He overcomes his demons to pursue his dreams. The group were outstanding and a pleasure to take out (although they were a little sleepy at school on the Friday!)

*Mrs Goddard, Drama*





## METAMORPHOSIS

Year 12 and 13 drama students went to see Frantic Assembly's *Metamorphosis*; a classic novella written by Franz Kafka and adapted by Lemn Sissay. Students were in awe at the incredible use of physicality and found the production concept to be both engaging and powerful, with innovative use of set and lighting throughout. The modern twist on the original tale, shone a light on the current cost of living crisis and the fragility of mental health in men. Students will have lots to write about when reviewing this production in their written exam, where they have to question whether theatre is relevant to a modern audience. As always, our students were exemplary in their conduct which could not be said for all school parties at the theatre. Well done gang!  
*Mrs Hassani, Head of Drama*

## EDWARD SCISSORHANDS

Year 9-12 Dance and Performing Arts students went into London to see a contemporary dance adaptation of *Edward Scissorhands* by Matthew Bourne at the Sadler's Wells Theatre.

Truly inspired by the talent of the dancers on stage, Birchwood students enjoyed the magical storyline based on the classic Tim Burton movie. A lucky number of BTEC Performing Arts students even got to meet Sir Matthew Bourne, the choreographer of the show. The students have been studying his work for their BTEC qualification and it was such a fabulous moment being able to meet him in real life.

*Mrs Goddard and Miss Parker, EPA*



## THE WOMAN IN BLACK

We took our Year 11 Drama students to the Theatre Royal in Norwich to see *The Woman in Black*. After three decades of playing at the Fortune Theatre in London, it is now on tour. The play tells the story of a lawyer obsessed with a curse that he believes has been cast over him and his family by the spectre of a Woman in Black. He engages a sceptical young actor to help him tell his terrifying story and exorcise the fear that grips his soul. It all begins innocently enough, but then, as they reach further into his darkest memories, they find themselves caught up in a world of eerie marshes and moaning winds. Our students showed a level of theatre etiquette that was unmatched by some of the older members of the audience and did Birchwood proud. They listened, engaged and screamed in all the right places. They will review this performance in their written exam in May. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all... until we walked through a graveyard on the way back to the bus and a group of our students decided to jump out at me... thanks for that guys!

*Mrs Hassani, Head of Drama*



## ITALIA CONTI WORKSHOP

GCSE Dance students from Years 9, 10 and 11 had an exciting opportunity to participate in a Dance workshop led by Hannah Ellaway, the Principal Leader of Italia Conti Associates in Bishops Stortford. Hannah put the students through their paces with an energetic warm up and technique based exercises before giving them a choice between Musical Theatre - a piece from *Hamilton*, or Commercial - a routine to *Lose my Breath* by

Desinny's Child. The students enjoyed trying something different and having a new teacher for the lesson! If they or any others are interested in trying Italia Conti - this runs every Saturday 9am - 1pm here at Birchwood High School. More information can be found on their website.

*Miss Parker, Dance*

# BIRCHWOOD SPORTS PARTNERSHIP (BSP)

This popular indoor track and field event was held at Birchwood High School with the majority of Bishop's Stortford local primary schools taking part. Miss Peet, along with 30 Birchwood Sports Leaders, organised the event which took place over three days. Years 5 & 6 competed on Wednesday and Thursday, followed by Years 3 and 4 on Friday. 17 local primary schools took part in the year 5 & 6 event, including BSP's newest primary school, Avanti Meadows. Wednesday's winners were St Joseph's with Windhill21 victorious on Thursday. Once the scores were combined, Windhill21 emerged as the overall champions and will go on to represent the BSP at the county finals. Due to the success of the Year 5/6 events, a Year 3/4 event was introduced last year. Twelve schools took part in a very noisy final day with Northgate overall winners, closely followed by Summercroft who finished only 2 points behind them. Every child taking part received a certificate with the overall winners receiving medals.

*Miss Peet, BSP Organiser*

Birchwood was proud to host BSP's Quickstix Hockey Competition. The event was attended by 13 local primary schools with 27 different teams competing (Furneux Pelham, Hillmead, High Wych, Mandeville, Manor Fields, Richard Whittington, St Andrews, Windhill 21, St Michael's, Albury, St Joseph's, Summercroft and Thorn Grove).

Birchwood High School's BSP student leadership were instrumental in hosting this event and reported how incredible the atmosphere was throughout.

The competitions' overall winners were Richard Whittington Primary School, who narrowly beat Summercroft 1-0 in a thrilling final. The event was kindly sponsored by Bishops' Stortford Hockey Club with club representative, Tony Roberts, awarding medals to all the winners.



Stortford Gymnastics host the popular BSP Gymnastics competitions across three separate dates in the Spring Term. A total of 36 teams took part with all Primary age groups represented. Students were encouraged to learn and then perform a series of sequences and then demonstrate a vault which was then judged. A huge thank you to Janine Peart and her team who allowed us to use their wonderful facilities.

This event was ably supported by a number of Birchwood students, some of whom impressed so much that they have been asked to go back to Stortford Gymnastics to coach.

Birchwood was also the happy host of Birchwood Sports Partnership's Netball Competition. The event was attended by 9 local primary schools. The competitions' overall winners were Thorley Hill.

A huge thanks to all Birchwood's amazing sports leaders who help to make these events happen.

*Miss Peet, BSP leader*



# PE news....



Well done to everyone who has represented the school this term!



# PE news....



Congratulations to all the girls who took part in the recent Netball District Tournament. A special mention goes to Year 8 A team who came an impressive second place.

*Miss Perret, PE*



The Birchwood Bobcats Cheerleading Squad were thrilled to be part of a display day. The squad demonstrated great leadership and communication skills alongside problem solving and working to deadlines as they performed their Pom dance and cheer routine for their super fans.

**Go Bobcats!**

# INTERHOUSE

## Netball and Football



### Year 7/8 Girls Netball:

1. Stort - 100 points
2. Hadham - 75 points
3. Dane - 50 points
4. Waytemore - 25 points

### Year 9/10 Girls Netball

Hadham were the only House to field a full team therefore they take the 100 House points (bottom photo).



### Year 7/8 Boys Football

1. Stort - 100 points
2. Dane - 75 points
3. Waytemore - 50 points
4. Hadham - 25 points



### Year 9/10 Boys Football

1. Hadham - 100 points
2. Dane - 75 points
3. Stort - 50 points
4. Waytemore - 25 points

### Overall Points Total as follows:

1. **Hadham - 300 points**
2. **Stort - 250 points**
3. **Dane - 200 points**
4. **Waytemore - 100 points**

Well done to everyone who took part, especially the boys who played in the pouring rain, hence no photos of those teams!

*Miss Peet, House*





# StudentNews...



Congratulations to Hannah King who won Gold and Max Wildman King who won a Silver for over 55kg weight class at the Sheffield Schools Judo Championship.



Congratulations to Ellie Picton who won her heat with a personal best of 9.47 seconds at the Essex and Eastern Championship. She came third overall in the competition.



We're very proud of MJ Disbrey who was recently awarded her Black belt in Karate!



Will Gilbank headed off to Melton Mowbray for the first round of the British National Junior Series. The Cicle Classic is a 105 km race that takes in not only the roads around Rutland but also many of the muddy farm tracks. Will was unfortunate to crash after 30 km, when a rider fell in front of him on one of the worst sectors, their wheel flying up knocking Will to the floor. Undeterred he chased back on, through the convoy of team cars until reaching the peloton where, although exhausted from his chase efforts, he hung on for an admirable 22nd place.

He now heads out to the Netherlands to race a UCI International race at Ster van Limburg on Easter Weekend, then to Penn ar Bed in Brest Northern France for another 3 day race.

Will is kindly supported by local Bishop's Stortford companies. Highway Cycles, Matts Auto Repairs, TLC Live Tutors and Knight Frank. If there is any interest in further supporting William or following his progress through his blog then please see <https://gilbankracing.com/>



Frankie Shellard completed the Chelmsford 5k race in 37 minutes and 42 seconds she ran along with our running team, Maisie's Little Stars, in honour of her friend, Maisie, who passed away in 2020. As a team, she has helped raise over £3,700 for The Sick Children's Trust and Maisie's Forever Garden at her primary school.



### Why not follow us on Facebook?

We have a Facebook page where you can keep up to date with events and meetings.

Please follow us at

Birchwood Parents Staff and Friends Association

Don't forget you can help us raise funds via  
TheGivingMachine

If you are a regular online shopper you can generate free donations to our school at no extra cost to you every time you shop via TheGivingMachine.

Please have a look online [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) and search for Birchwood High School.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM is being held on Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 7pm in Room A2 (by the Sports Hall). All are welcome to join us to see how money raised is being spent and learn about our plans for the next year.

## VOLUNTEERS

We would love to have some extra helpers if anyone would like to volunteer. This would involve two or three events each year and meetings once or twice per term. It is not a big commitment, we promise! Plus, we can confirm there will be cake... Also, we have a vacancy for a Chairperson, if you'd like more information on this role please email us at: [birchwoodpsfa@gmail.com](mailto:birchwoodpsfa@gmail.com)



## BIRCHWOOD BONUS BALL

Congratulations to Andrea Gibson who was the winner of the January draw! Ball 14 was drawn by Deryk Bull. The winner of the February's draw was Mark S with Ball 15 being drawn by Mrs Jacobson. Andrea and Mark won a huge £184.50 each.

The Bonus Ball is a great way to support the school, and at the same time be in with a chance of winning some cash every month! It is £3 per month per ball, payable either in one lump sum or monthly as a standing order. A draw takes place at the end of each month and the winner receives half of the money collected, the other half going towards PSFA funds, for our students.

Our bank details are:

Barclays Bank

Account Name: Birchwood PSFA

Account Number: 23298728

Sort Code: 20-25-19

Email [treasurerbwpsfa@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerbwpsfa@gmail.com) to let us know you've paid and how many balls you would like to enter.

## SAVE THE DATES

Big Birchwood Quiz – Friday 17 May 2024, 7pm for a 7.30pm start in the Main Hall.

Family Race Night – Friday 12 July 2024, 7pm for a 7.30pm start in the Main Hall.

Musical Bingo with Snow White Trash – Friday 18 October 2024, 7pm for a 7.30pm start in the Main Hall.

More details on events will be posted on our Facebook page nearer the time.

## OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT THE PSFA

You can generate free donations to our school at no extra cost to you every time you online shop.

1. TheGivingMachine. Please have a look online [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) and search for Birchwood High School.
2. We have registered with Stikins Name Labels. The school can earn up to 30% commission on all sales. Please visit [www.stikins.co.uk](http://www.stikins.co.uk) and quote our fundraising number 1955.
3. Birchwood High School are now registered with easyfundraising, which means you can raise FREE donations for us Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! You can find our easyfundraising page at [https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/birchwoodhigh/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=pmc&utm\\_content=gs-email1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/birchwoodhigh/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=pmc&utm_content=gs-email1)

These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us.



# International Women's Day



Imagine a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality. Collectively we can all inspire inclusion. This was the mission statement made on Friday 8 March – International Women's Day.

OCEAN group led the celebrations with ribbon selling, cake sales and a fair in the Drama Studio at lunch time. Games were organised such as 'Strong Girls Club', where girls attempted dead lifts, 'Pin The Sash On The Suffragette', a ping pong game with questions linking to inspiring women through time and a discussion and colouring corner that involved students making posters.

In form time students were shown a presentation about International Women's Day with a speech by Stephanie Boyce about the importance of the questions surrounding the lack of women in leadership positions across the UK.

We hope that the effort put in by students from OCEAN raised some awareness about this national celebration and evoked some interesting conversations throughout the week.

*Mrs Hassani*



## What is Pancake Day?

This year, Pancake Day was on the 13 February. Shrove Tuesday, often known as Pancake Day, marks the beginning of Lent (a Christian festival) which begins on the day after: Ash Wednesday. Lent is a 40 day period leading up to Easter. For Christians, this is a time for sacrifice. You may find people give up sweets, chocolates, crisps during this time but years ago, eggs, flour and milk were more commonly given up. When you combine eggs, flour and milk you get pancakes! As a result of this, pancakes were commonly made on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday to use up all of the remaining ingredients.

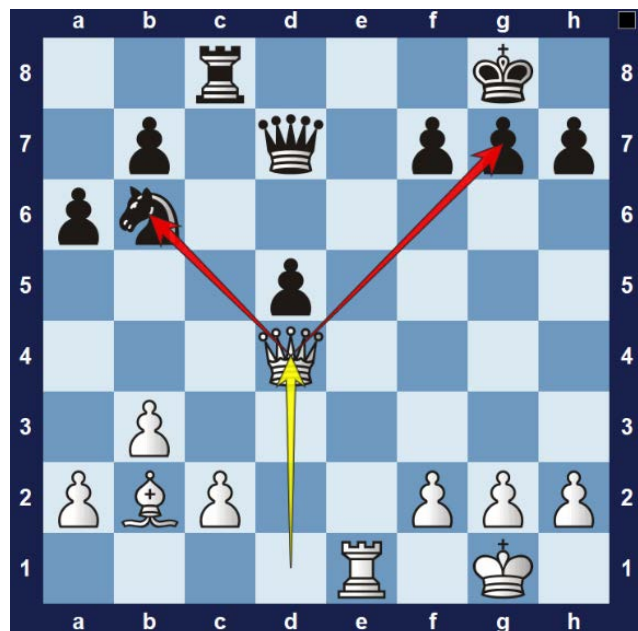
*D Anderson, BBC Reporter*

## Report for the Valentine's Bake-Off

At the Valentine's Bake Off, there was a wonderful array of spectacular cakes and sweet treats. Aliya Alican made a selection of cookies and a red velvet cake. Jack Mills baked a "love you" cake. Pearl Wong made a "love cake" with pink and white marshmallows. They all looked amazing and probably tasted even better, but the overall winner of the Bake-Off was Jack Mills.

As well as the Bake Off, there were other treat-based activities, including 'Guess the Number of Sweets in the Jar' and a cupcake sale.

*D Anderson, BBC Reporter*



## Do you know about the... Fork move in Chess?

A fork is a basic chess tactic that consists of a single piece attacking two or more pieces at the same time. The attacking piece is known as the forking piece, while the attacked troops are known as the forked pieces. The pawn attacks the bishop and the knight at the same time.

Did you know you can now play chess in the Library every break and lunchtime? Ask Mrs Barnard for more details.

# ALUMNI NEWS

### KATIE CALLAGHAN

Congratulations to Birchwood alumni Katie Callaghan, who recently received a British Citizen Award at Westminster Palace for her charitable work for Cards for Bravery, an organisation dedicated to brightening the days of hospitalised and seriously ill children.

### ASHLEY SUTTON

Ashley Sutton is aiming to become the first driver in the history of the Kwik Fit British Touring Car Championship to win five titles NAPA Racing UK.

### PRESLEY BLACKWELL

Can you help Presley Blackwell?

Presley Blackwell has setup a go fundedme page to raise money for crucial Eye Surgery needed to be able to fulfil his dream of becoming a boxer.

<https://bit.ly/3TNnBpR>

## ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOUR AWARDS

This term we've introduced a new set of rewards to recognise students who do the right things each and every day.

To qualify for the Attendance Award, you must have over 98% attendance for the term.

To qualify for the Behaviour Award, you must have received 0 behaviour points.

All the students that meet the above criteria are entered into a prize draw to win an Amazon voucher. The winners for each year are drawn at random by each Head of Year. Head to our Facebook page to watch this term's winners being announced.



# Student of the Month



Congratulations to all the students who received their Student of the Month rewards. Only 10 for these badges and certificates are awarded from each faculty in the whole year - well done!

*Abby Kruller-Robson*

Art

*Anna Baros*

English

*Claudia Huertas-Wanceulen*

French

*Florence Hyams*

Maths

*Lucas Berry*

Science

*Millie Davies*

Geography

*Olivia Peacock*

Drama

*Rebecca Bedwell*

Food Technology

*Summer Bishop*

Film

*Amber Lindborg*

Business

*Edgar Boyce*

Religious Studies

*Evangelene Doyle*

Dance

*Sophie Robinson*

History

*Anelia O'Keefe*

PLC

*Georgina Branney*

Statistics

*Imogen Ficken*

Music

*Miguel Tavares Dettmer*

IT/Computer Science

*Olivia Pender*

Intervention Award

*Amelia Bush*

German

*Denisa Barbos*

MFL

*Gabriela Caboz de Jesus*

Spanish

*Jarvis Cunningham*

Technology

*Zach Gill*



# Ski Trip

During February Half Term, Mr Torrance took 50 Yr13 students on the sixth form annual ski trip. This year's destination was Sestriere in the Italian Alps. It was also the first year that we have had a snowboarding group, as well as our normal larger pool of beginners and one group of experienced skiers.

Our first day was an early start (01:45am!). So, as you can imagine, there were a lot of sleepy heads and a very quiet coach on the way to Gatwick. On arrival in Turin, our first stop was the Allianz Stadium, home of the famous Juventus Football Club. This certainly woke up the group up as we stopped for a stadium tour, visited the club museum and picked up some souvenirs from the club store. After the tour, we made our way up in to the mountains to the Hotel Uppala, which was directly opposite the slopes. It was the perfect location with

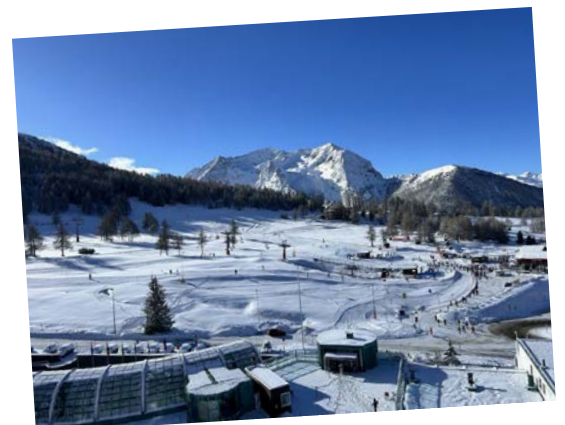
instant access to the main meet point for ski school, and lift to explore the Via Latte (Milky Way) ski area.

For the first three days, the weather was absolutely amazing - the sun was out and visibility was brilliant. This really helped all the groups make excellent progress and build their confidence. On day four, the snow started falling (the resort really needed it), and continued all day and through the night. When we woke up for the final day, the sun was out once again and the views and change in the landscape was simply stunning!

Apres ski involved bowling, pizza night, Mr Barratt's Super Ski Quiz, the Birchwood Ski Awards and end of week disco. We even had our own resident DJ's, Ryan and Charlie who entertained us with their turntable skills.

Year 13 were an absolute pleasure to spend the week with, their caring nature, great sense of humour, and teamwork was simply excellent. I would like to also thank the super staff that gave up their week to make this trip memorable and lots of fun for all involved. Without dedicated staff, these types of opportunities can't happen. Thank you to all the Sestriere 2024 Ski Group - Mr Barratt, Miss Clements, Mrs Kee Rose, and Mr Hill.

*Mr Torrance, Head of Sixth Form*



# Sixth Form News

## Leighton starts a free school uniform charity for all local schools.

Year 12 pupil and Co-CEO + Founder of Bishops Fundamental Costs (BFCS) - a free school uniform charity, Leighton Bishop, attended the Epping Forest District Council's Cost of Living Youth Conference as a guest speaker. The event had 125 delegates and teachers from 8 secondary schools all across the Epping district.

The day's agenda was focused on the effects of the cost-of-living crisis on people's lives and how to alleviate the pressures. He also met with councillors and representatives from organisations like the Jack Petchey Foundation. Leighton discussed what Bishops Fundamental Costs is and how it helps those in need.

BFCS is a charity founded in 2022 designated to provide free school uniforms to those in need in and around the Bishop Stortford area. For more information, please visit [www.BFCScommunity.co.uk](http://www.BFCScommunity.co.uk)



## The Diana Award Anti- Bullying Programme.

Sixth form students, Amelia Nicholson and Jack Eley, delivered a presentation to Years 7-10 about an exciting campaign we have launched, working with the Diana Award Anti-Bullying programme.

Set up in memory of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, the programme works to empower young people to lead change, unlock their potential, inspire action and create opportunities.

At Birchwood, we have opened applications for students to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors for the school. Valuable skills will be gained throughout the process, and for older years, this leadership programme will look great on your CV or UCAS applications. Our brand-new recruits will get to wear shiny new ambassador badges too!

If you have any questions regarding the process or the programme, please find Amelia or Jack around school, or message them on Teams.

Good luck to everyone who has applied we looking forward to speaking to you in the interview!

Amelia Nicholson,  
*Deputy Head Student*



Dane

# House

Birchwood has been busy this term celebrating Valentine's Day and raising money of Essex & Herts Air Ambulance.

Our Charity Day began with The Great Birchwood Bake Off. We absolutely loved seeing all the Valentine's Day themed bakes. Congratulations to our winners:

- 1st Prize: Jack Mills
- 2nd Prize: Alfred Hildrew
- 3rd Prize: Aliya Alican

Breaktime was spent taking part in the Cupid & Heart Treasure Hunt, Guess The Number Of Sweets In The Jar Competition (won by Evan Yeates) and entering the raffle, where the winning prize was £100 scuba diving gift card (donated by a very generous parent).

Lunchtime saw the Staff vs Student Darts Competition with Mr Gilbank and Mr Law taking on Year 11 students, Ollie Stock and Callum Dargue. The Staff Team came out victorious in front of a large crowd in the Sports Hall.

The Emoji Quiz form winners were 7DSS and the Kahoot Quiz form winners were 12IDR.

Thank you to all students and staff that took part in our Charity Day events and congratulations to our winners. We raised £2417.50.

*Mrs Collyer, Head of House*



Start



# House



Well done to all 61 students who have received over 150 House Points. You should be very proud of yourselves - we are! Keep up the great work.



The Essex and Herts Air Ambulance is our chosen house charity this year. We were thrilled to have them host an assembly for our sixth form students. This detailed how the charity helps our community and why funding is so important.

## House Captains are listed below:

### Hadham

*Lola Linsell*  
*LayLa Ellis*  
*Joshua French*  
*Michael Stables*  
*Naomi Fuller-Lewis*  
*Jayda Lloyd Warren*

### Dane

*Ava Johns*  
*Jack King*  
*Tabitha Hermit*

### Stort

*Tessa Day*  
*Eva Hall*  
*Abigail Sear*

### Waytemore

*Oscar Fulk*  
*Luke Silvester*  
*Jamie Paramo*  
*Charlie Jones*  
*Mia Naughton*  
*Keira Picton*  
*Rosie May*  
*Leighton Bishop*  
*Alex Curtis*  
*Imogen Thorpe*  
*Rosie Pressland*

## House Points Totals:

**1st: Hadham**  
**30,526**

**2nd: Dane**  
**29,611**

**3rd: Waytemore**  
**29,417**

**4th: Stort**  
**25,598**



Waytemore



# STORTFORD VIKINGS BASKETBALL CLUB

Birchwood High Sports Hall

Thursdays

**6pm-7pm: Community Sessions**

**7pm-8pm: U14's**

Fridays

**5.30pm-6.30pm: U12's**

**6.30pm-7.30pm: Adult Scrimmage**

For those who are new to the sport, we encourage participation in our community sessions as a starting point and introduction to both the sport and our club. The U12's and U14's sessions are tailored for team play in local leagues, focusing on game plans and plays. If you're 15 or older, you can join our Adult Scrimmage sessions. Enjoy the camaraderie, build friendships, and stay active!

EMAIL: [HEADCOACH@STORTFORDVIKINGS.CO.UK](mailto:HEADCOACH@STORTFORDVIKINGS.CO.UK)



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Service**



Hertfordshire Community  
NHS Trust

# Want to ask the School Nurses a Question?

Come to our live  
Instagram Q&A on the  
10/04/2024 at 15:00



**@hct\_schoolnursing**