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WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

Ofsted Visit Update

As you will be aware, Ofsted visited our school on Tuesday and Wednesday last week. While we are unable to share details of the inspection at this time, we are delighted to share that our students conducted themselves with exceptional maturity and represented our school proudly.

A huge well done to all our students for their impressive behaviour and positive attitude during the visit. We will send a further update as soon as we are able to share more information.

Charity Day Reminder – Thursday 13 February

Our next Charity Day will take place on Thursday 13 February 2025. This will raise money for the Animal Rescue Centre in Bishop's Stortford, which is our chosen school charity for this year.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT A NON-UNIFORM DAY

Option 1 – Valentines day themed sweet cones £2.00.

Deadline for pre-order is **Friday 31st January 2025.**

Option 2 – Chocolate Raffle - £1.00 for 5 tickets.

The deadline for pre-order is **Friday 31st January 2025.**

Photography Competition

Enter our Winter Scenic Photography competition. All entries should be sent to Mrs Collyer by Friday 7 February. [Full details can be found here.](#)

Careers Notice

EY Careers Webinar: Apprenticeships in Finance, Business & Technology

EY is hosting an informative webinar for students interested in careers in finance, business, and technology. During this session, you'll learn about the range of apprenticeship opportunities available at EY and discover which programme might be the best fit for you.

What to Expect:

- An overview of EY's apprenticeship programmes in Audit, Tax, and Technology
- Insights and experiences from a current EY apprentice
- A live Q&A session to ask any questions you may have
- Specialist guidance on how to apply

Date & Time: 4 February, 6:30 pm - 7:15 pm

[Register Here:](#)

This is a fantastic opportunity to explore exciting career paths and hear from those who have experienced EY's apprenticeship programmes firsthand.

Co-Curriculum Reminder

Our Co-Curriculum (linked below) is filled with activities and ideas chosen by each of our subject departments to help you get inspired. These activities will give you lots of different ways to explore topics and learn more about the things you enjoy. You'll find suggestions for things to Watch, Listen, Read, Go, and Do—and they're designed to be interesting and challenging, so you'll always have something new to try!

[Discover more.](#)

Weekly Safeguarding Tips:

Stranger Danger

- Remind your child not to talk to strangers, accept gifts, or get into cars with people they don't know.
- Set up a 'safe word' for your child to use if someone else is picking them up unexpectedly.

Young Musicians Of The Year

We are very excited to announce that the first round of Birchwood's Young Musician competition is coming up. The categories students can enter are Pop, Musical Theatre, Classical and Junior Piano (years 7,8 and 9) - with the overall winners being decided by judges in the live final.

To enter the competition students should send a video recording of themselves performing their

favourite piece to Mr Grogan – mgrogan@birchwoodhigh.org.uk. All styles and genres of music are welcome but please state which category you'd like to enter. Videos can be uploaded to the student's school Office 365 OneDrive and a link sent via email or Teams. Please note that recordings should be made in a communal space e.g. living room.

Please send entries to Mr Grogan, by email or Teams, by 5pm Tuesday 11 February. The finalists will be announced on Thursday 13 February for the live final taking place at 7pm in the School Hall on Thursday 27 February. There will be prizes up for grabs, and a guest judge to award the winners, we look forward to getting your entries.

Poetry Competition – "A Journey"

We are excited to announce a poetry competition open to all year groups! The theme is "A Journey". This could be anything from a physical journey—like a trip to school or a journey to space—to a personal journey of growth or discovery. [The theme is completely open to interpretation, so let your creativity flow!](#)

How to Enter:

- Write your poem based on the theme "A Journey"
- Submit your entry to Miss Shackleton in the Library by Monday, 10th February

A winner will be selected in the last week of the half term, with prizes awarded for both lower school and upper school categories.

Support Meeting for SEND Parents & Carers

Hertfordshire County Council is inviting parents and carers of children with SEND to a relaxed and supportive meeting at Windhill21. This gathering offers valuable information and networking opportunities.

What to Expect:

- A welcoming space to discuss topics that matter to you
- Practical advice and emotional support
- Opportunities to network with other parents and professionals
- Light refreshments provided

The meeting aims to provide insights and support, allowing parents and carers to share experiences and ask questions. Whether you're looking for advice, guidance, or simply a chance to connect with others in a similar situation, this event promises to be both informative and enriching.

- Date: 19th March
- Time: 10:00 am - 11:30 am
- Location: Windhill21

Delivering Special Provision Locally Newsletter

Please see the [latest newsletter](#) from DSPL providing information to support our SEND students.

YEAR 7

PGL Trip Payment Reminder:

The payment deadline for June's PGL trip to the Isle of Wight is Friday 28 February. If you have any questions, please contact trips@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

YEAR 8

Update from Mrs Hinski

Thank you so much for your support and patience during our Ofsted visit, it was lovely to receive some encouraging emails before our visitors arrived, and it was great to feel we are all part of the same vision for our school. With that in mind please encourage your child to report anything they feel unfit in our school. I will be doing work on the phrase 'snitching' as dealing with things that are not right is not snitching but standing up for what is right.

I look forward to meeting many of you at the forthcoming Parents Evening, please book your appointments.

Year 8 Parents Evening

Year 8 Parents' Evening will take place on Tuesday, 4 February, from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. These meetings will be booked online and held in person at the school.

The online booking system opens at 7.00pm on Tuesday, 28 January, and closes at 10.00am on Tuesday, 4 February. To access the system, visit <https://parents-booking.co.uk/birchwood>.

To book appointments, you will need details that match our school records exactly, including:

- Your first name and surname
- Your child's first name, surname, and date of birth

For further guidance, please refer to the [Parent Booking Guide](#).

We recommend logging in as soon as the system opens at 7.00pm on Tuesday, 28 January, as appointments are likely to book quickly, especially for teachers with multiple Year 8 classes.

If you need to confirm your details or require assistance, please contact ekimberley@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

Cologne Trip Payment Reminder

The payment deadline for the Cologne trip is Friday 28 February. If you have any questions, please contact trips@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

YEAR 9

Vaccinations – 26 February 2025

In line with the National Immunisation Programme, the Community School Aged Immunisation Service offers Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio and Meningococcal ACWY vaccinations to all pupils in Year 9.

The immunisation session is due to take place on **Wednesday 26 February 2025**. Every child in Year 9 will have the opportunity for immunisation on the day and all students will see the nurse who will confirm consent, students without consent will be sent back to lessons.

[Please read this letter for further details and ensure you complete the Immunisation Form linked within, as requested.](#)

The electronic link to accept or decline this vaccination is open until **12pm on Wednesday 26 February 2025**. If any parents have difficulty accessing the online consent form, please contact the Immunisation Team on **01727 732062**. If you do not wish for your child to have the immunisation you need to sign in the '**No consent**' box.

Please note 'No response' is not 'No consent'.

Year 9 School Photographs

Please be aware that Year 9 students will have their updated school photographs taken on **Tuesday 4 February**. These photographs are to ensure our school records are up to date and are available for parents to purchase. More information will be shared in next week's bulletin.

Trip Payment Reminder: Cologne & Ardeche

The payment deadline for the upcoming Cologne and Ardeche trips is Friday 28 February. If you have any questions, please contact trips@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

YEAR 10

Trip Payment Reminder: Cologne and Madrid

The payment deadline for the upcoming Cologne and Madrid trips is Friday 28 February. If you have any questions, please contact trips@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

Work Shadowing Day

Work Shadowing Day will take place on Wednesday 25 June. Work shadowing is an opportunity for your child to attend work for the day in a purely observational capacity to get a real-life insight into the world of work. Please look out in your inbox this week as we will be sending out further information on how this process works.

YEAR 11

Parents' Evening – Tuesday 28 January

Due to this Ofsted inspection, the Year 11 Parents' Evening will now take place on **Tuesday, 28 January, from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.**

All original appointment times will remain the same. Any changes in teacher availability have been emailed to you. If you are now unable to attend, please contact **ekimberley@birchwoodhigh.org.uk**.

Thank you very much for your understanding and flexibility. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Year 11 School Photographs – Monday 27 January

Year 11 students will have their updated school photographs taken **today** to ensure our records are up to date. These photographs will also be available for parents to purchase. Each student will have an individual photograph taken, along with a form group photograph.

Parents must register online to access photographs as soon as they are ready:

1. Visit www.carmeljaneshop.co.uk.
2. Enter your unique code: **JRPJBKAXF5**.
3. Provide your child's full name as it appears on the school system.

Prom Payment and Information

Each year, Prom is kindly organised by parents of current Year 11 students and this year Alice Kidd is organising the Birchwood Prom 2025 with Gemma Hughes.

It will be held on **Wednesday 25th June 2025, from 7pm until 11:30pm** at Parklands, Quendon Hall, which has previously been used for Birchwood Proms.

Please note: Students will need to make their own way to and from the venue.

The date has been decided by considering the school & exam calendars; while we hope this date suits all, we know we may not be able to please everyone.

Tickets cost £60 per person and are **strictly for Birchwood students only**. The prom is an inclusive event so there are no other costs involved on the evening.

Included in the price of the ticket is:

- Food (burgers, hotdogs, chips etc)
- Soft drinks, candy floss, popcorn & sweets
- A Photo Booth, of course a DJ and a few other surprises

Please make payment as soon as possible – and no later than Saturday 1st February.

Account Name: Alice Kidd (use full name – do not shorten or use initials)

Sort Code: 20-36-98

Account number: 53423395

Please use your child's name as reference

We hope that all students feel comfortable in attending. Please let us know if we can do anything to help accommodate everyone. If you would like to contact me (Alice) please call on 07800 510232 or message directly for any questions. Alternatively, you can email Mrs Julie Gair at school jgair@birchwoodhigh.org.uk who will contact Alice and Gemma on your behalf.

Kind Regards,

Alice and Gemma

On behalf of Birchwood High School

Year 11 – Hoodie Purchase (DEADLINE Friday 31 January 2025)

Thank you for all your responses regarding the design of the Leavers Hoodies. The company have made up the design and it has been checked against the information provided.

At this point I am afraid no further names can be added to the '25' on the reverse.

Please follow this link to purchase a hoodie for your child.

<https://www.leavershoodies.com/birchwood-high-school-2025-leavers>

NOTE: It is not compulsory for them to have one.

There are a range of colours to choose from and you have the option of including their name/nickname across the shoulders and their initials on the front. Please ensure you check spelling, sizes, and colours before completing your order.

The shop closes on Friday 31st January after which time you WILL NOT be able to purchase a hoodie.

You will be ordering directly through the company – not via the school or Parent Pay so any queries will need to be directed to Annie annie@leavershoodies.com 01273 041871.

Hoodies will be delivered to the school on Friday 24th February and handed out during the Year 11 Leavers morning in May.

If you have any queries, please contact Mrs Gair jgair@birchwoodhigh.org.uk and she will be happy to help.

SIXTH FORM

Year 12 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 11 February

Year 12 Parents' Evening will take place on Tuesday 11 February from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. These meetings will be booked online and held in-person at the school.

The online booking system will open at 7.00pm on Tuesday 4 February and close at 10:00am on Tuesday 11 February. A link to the booking system and a reminder of how to log in will be emailed to you ahead of the booking system going live.

Sixth Form Lanyards Reminder

As part of our school uniform policy, all Sixth Form students are required to wear their lanyards each day, which must include their photo ID. Please ensure your child is wearing their correct lanyard every morning.

If a student forgets their lanyard, temporary lanyards can be issued for the day. However, these are not to be used as a long-term substitute for their photo ID.

Temporary lanyards should be returned to the office next to the library as soon as possible. These lanyards are easily identifiable as they have the words 'Sixth Form' in large letters and do not display student photos.

VACANCIES

Caretaker

We are seeking to appoint, for February 2025, an experienced Caretaker to join our site team and be responsible for ensuring the school grounds and buildings are clean and well maintained as a safe and healthy environment for all users of the school premises. You will make a significant contribution to the maintenance of the buildings, fixtures and fittings.

More details can be found on [My New Term](#).

Journeys

POETRY COMPETITION


DEADLINE: MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY

Write about a physical journey (to school, to space, etc.) or a personal journey. Be creative and interpret the theme in your way! All entries should be handed to Miss Shackleton in the library.





WINTER SCENIC PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Please send entries to 
acollyer@birchwoodhigh.org.uk
or on Teams.

Deadline to enter is Friday 7th
February