



Birchwood High School

your dreams, your future, our challenge

Start of Year Updates

6 September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

A warm welcome to you all and to the new year here at Birchwood High School. I would like to extend a special welcome to those families who are new to the school whether that is in Year 7, Year 12 or to another year group. We are all excited about the year ahead and what opportunities it will offer your children.

The summer saw us able to celebrate with students in Years 11 and 13 on some very impressive exam results. In Year 13 every student who was looking for a university place was able to access one with the vast majority being accepted at their first choice. This is a huge achievement in such a competitive area. I would like to wish all of the Year 13s every success as they move on to university, an apprenticeship or employment.

The Year 11 GCSE results were strong and showed improved outcomes for students in all areas of the school. As a consequence, we are welcoming one of our largest ever groups into Year 12 to start their A Level and BTEC courses. I would like to congratulate all Year 11 students on their achievements and wish them success in their next steps.

The start of term sees us welcome a number of new staff to Birchwood. These are: Mrs Bulman (MFL); Mr Campaigne (Science) ; Mr Delf (Assistant Principal) ; Miss Edwards (English); Mrs Hinski (Head of Year 8); Mrs Holland (MFL); Mrs Jennings (MFL); Mrs Jones (Maths); Miss Kara (RS); Miss Lennox (Head of Drama); Mrs Morgan Wren (Art); Miss Rowland (Geography); Mrs White (SEND). We are very excited to have all of these staff joining us and we look forward to working with them over the coming years.

I would like to draw your attention to a few points for the coming year:

Uniform

All students are expected to attend school in full uniform. There will be some reminder letters going out to families where items are missing or incorrect. On the days when your child has a PE lesson they should *not* attend school in their PE kit. We have been able to arrange the timetable so there is sufficient changing space for all groups doing PE. If there are issues with uniform please approach your child's tutor or Head of Year.

Principal, Mr Sam Griffin

Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 5BD

Telephone: 01279 655936 | Email: admin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk | Website: www.birchwoodonline.co.uk

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Arrival and departure

Both the school and the town are very busy places and there is a huge amount of traffic coming onto our site. We have noticed an increasing number of students being dropped off as early as 7am. As an example I got to work at 7.30 today and counted over 40 students on site. We are not in a position to supervise children at this time and are exploring ways of keeping the site closed until 8.00 when we can have adequate on site supervision. I would ask that where possible you do not drop students off this early and we will update you when any changes to site access come in.

In the evenings the site is open to the public who use our sports facilities. Unless your child is involved in school activity we would ask that they are away from the site by 16.00. This time should adequately cover the later departure of the public buses.

Phones

As you will all be aware mobile phones should not be seen or heard during the school day. Should you need to get a message to your child during the school day then an email to reception is the best way and we can pass messages on.

Contact with school

Please can I remind parents that if you phone or visit the school without an appointment it is unlikely that the person you want to speak to will be available. In most cases they will be teaching. Email is always the best way of making contact and will help staff to manage their work effectively. Unfortunately last year we had to speak with a number of parents about rude or aggressive conduct when speaking to the school. I would kindly ask you all to remain polite and courteous when dealing with the school.

Over the coming weeks you will see our extra-curricular activities starting up. I would encourage everyone to get involved in some activity outside of lessons. It is often through these groups that people build lasting friendships, develop their confidence and find life-long passions.

You can always find further information about the school on our website (www.birchwoodhighschool.co.uk) or by following us on Facebook (Birchwood High School).

I look forward to sharing more about life at Birchwood with you as the term progresses.

Sam Griffin
Principal

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