

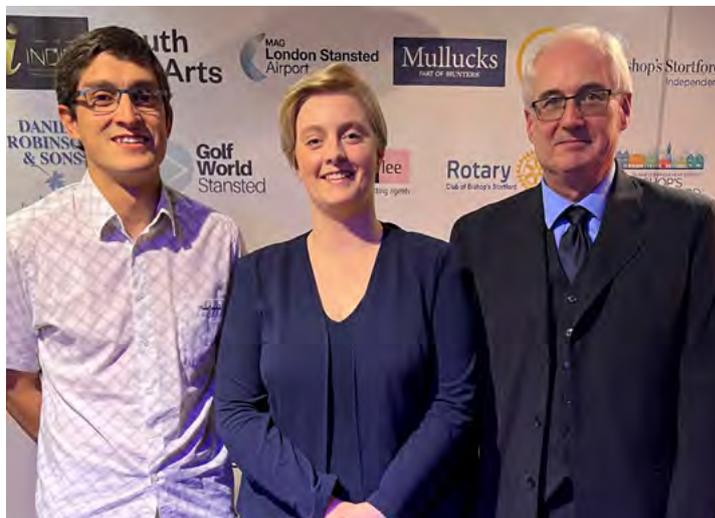
# BIRCHWOOD *News*

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

## Birchwood “Unsung Heroes” receive their highly commended certificate at the Indies

On Thursday 18 November, Miss Munro, Mr Osborne and myself went to the annual Indie awards at the South Mill Arts Centre. Our PPE manufacturing team had been nominated for the unsung hero award by readers of the Bishop’s Stortford Independent. It was a fantastic evening with a red carpet and meal laid on by a local caterer. We were at a table with the other nominee; Dr Sian Stanley. It was great to put a face to a name as during our time manufacturing we were in contact on several occasions to ensure the PPE went out to where it was needed locally. We were so proud to be awarded the highly commended certificate in recognition of our work over that challenging time.

*Mr Stephens, Technology*



## Rotary Competition ... Birchwood wins intermediate level

On Tuesday 16 November we hosted the annual Rotary young engineer challenge. Teams from TBSHS, Leventhorpe and the Bishops Stortford College came to compete at three different levels. It was a really tricky task for all but our intermediate team of Lucy Moorfield, Rosie Thorpe and Severin Fleet took first place with our other two teams taking a close second in their respective categories.

Olivia said, “I really enjoyed this competition as I met new people and had a new experience. It was very helpful as I learnt a lot more about teamwork and perseverance skills, for example, if something went wrong, we would figure out what the problem was and how to solve it.

We were put into teams based on year groups and our challenge was to create a weight powered vehicle. Whoever’s vehicle worked the best and went up the slope alone would win. In the end our vehicle needed a nudge and we found it was a lot harder to go on a slope than the floor where we originally tested our vehicle. Overall Birchwood won and I took away some great teamwork skills and a new experience. If anyone is interested in wood tech or problem solving I would 100% recommend this to you”.

*Olivia Thake, Year 7.*



Birchwood remembers...  
Matthew Reader played the  
Last Post on the 11 November...

Inside this month’s edition:

Headlines ...page 3, House News pages 4, 5 and 6

Sports News...pages 8, 9, 10 and 11

PSFA...14 and 15

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, especially in these times. We would like to keep the students and ourselves as safe as possible so encourage everyone to use this payment method.

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)



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Term Dates 2021/22

#### Autumn 2021

1 September - 21 December 21

Finish at 1.30pm

#### Spring 2022

Wednesday 5 January -

Friday 1 April

Half term

Monday 14 February -

Friday 18 February

#### Summer 2022

Tuesday 19 April -

Friday 22 July

Half term

Monday 30 May -

Friday 3 June

#### CPD Days

Wednesday 5 January

Thursday 21 July

Friday 22 July

## News in Brief.....



Year 8's have been looking at health and lifestyle in science and during this lesson Mr Loveday made a crime scene in the lab where students had to work out which drug was the mysterious substance by carrying out scientific tests. Well done, Year 8. Mr Loveday, Science



## What is FUSION?

If you do not know what fusion is, it is a Tuesday lunchtime club that is for the LGBT+ community or people who support them. If you would like to join, then please go to D4 Tuesday lunchtime and you can bring your lunch with you. Fusion is always happy to welcome new members.

### Current updates

Fusion has given pins to its new members.

### What do we do there?

We spend time together and discuss struggles like bullying and hurtful comments from other students. We have recently been learning how to deal with stress by meditating and breathing exercises.

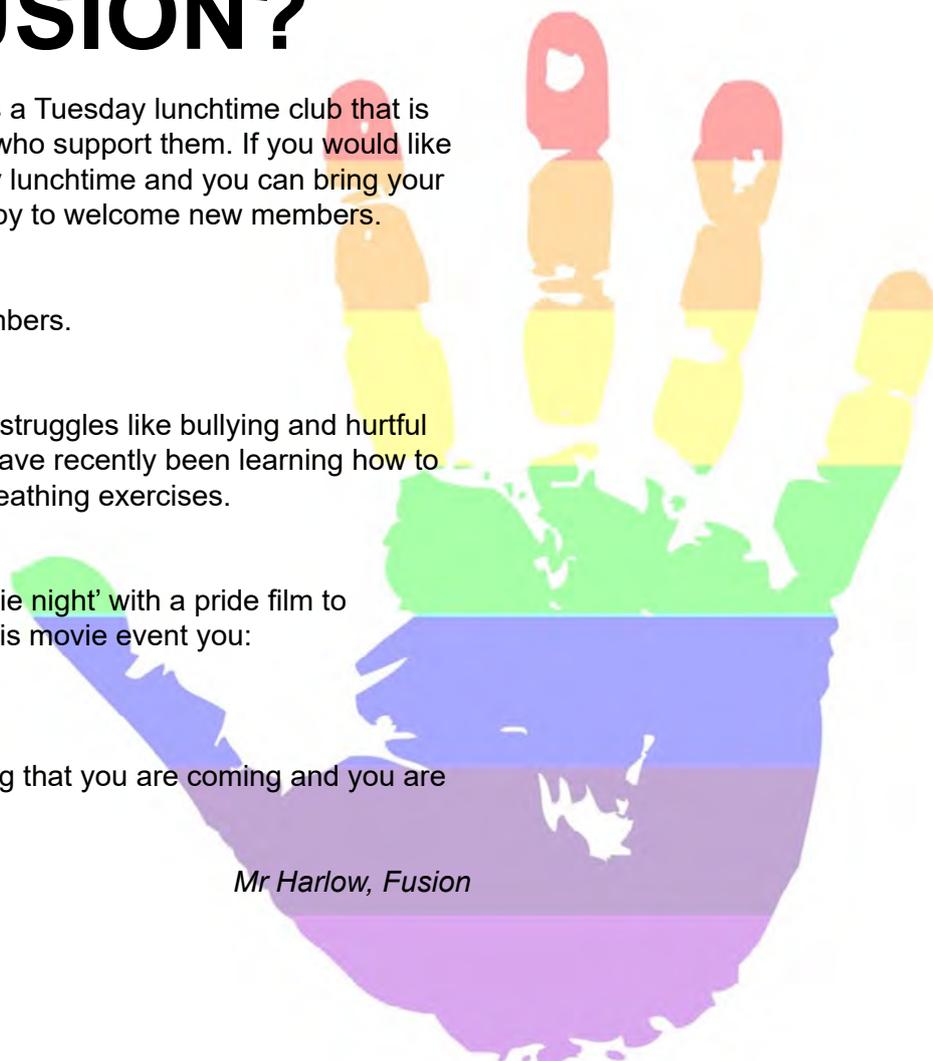
### What will we be doing in the future?

In February we will be holding a 'movie night' with a pride film to celebrate pride. To sign up to go to this movie event you:

- must be part of fusion

- then put a message on teams saying that you are coming and you are done. I hope to see you there.

*Mr Harlow, Fusion*





# 'Headlines'

One of the things we must not forget is a common adage that we reflect upon this time of year – the front cover of this edition of Birchwood News captures this well with students remembering those who lost their lives fighting for their country at time of conflict, whilst the photo of Mr Stephens, Ms Munro and Mr. Osborne reminds us of their team of 'unsung heroes' and their hard work making face masks for hospitals, care homes and prisons during those early months of the pandemic.

I hope you enjoy this autumnal edition of Birchwood News, full of uplifting stories of sporting heroics, artistic photography and extra-curricular events. This is what school should be about. Despite the parameters of the 'new normal' I am really keen to aim for every Birchwood Student to do at least one thing above and beyond their normal lessons. We are introducing shortly some

new display screens across the school to make sure students know what clubs and events are on combined with a biometric after school registration system so we can track who is and who is not getting involved.

On a different note, I was at a secondary headteacher gathering last week – the first time I had actually met some of my Hertfordshire colleagues face-to-face for over 2 years. We were able to share common stories and experiences during one of the most challenging periods many of us could remember. Yet there was a collective resolve to make things better, keep things as normal as possible and retain our focus on making sure students catch-up, progress and enjoy coming to school.

A key speaker told us we should consider ourselves in a covid endemic rather than pandemic. An endemic is defined as a disease or condition which is regularly found among particular people or area. I think we've all come to realise that Covid is not going away. Life is all about taking risks and we are in a much better and more informed position than we were back in March 2020. At Birchwood, I know that students and staff would far rather be in school than work from home - so we continue to do all we can to keep safe and hygienic whilst at the same time enjoy being together and learning collectively.

Practically speaking, we will keep students and staff wearing face masks indoors and in communal areas for the rest of this term. Despite the numbers of positive cases at Birchwood dropping rapidly at the moment, I think this is a prudent measure particularly with the concerns around the new Omicron variant from South Africa. I do acknowledge that face masks are uncomfortable and do impede communication, but it is better that we put up with these minor infringements to our liberty than go into lockdown again. Any student who has an underlying medical condition or who is exempt for any other reason can apply for an exemption card or badge – there are some useful links on the DfE website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>. We will be writing to you shortly with details of the Government's plans to conduct LFTs for all children in school when they return from the Christmas Break.

## Key Priorities

Aside from restoring routines and face-to-face learning this term, it has been rewarding to refocus on key priorities for the year ahead. Our main areas for improvement include:

- Using teacher assessments and data drops to ensure that we accurately gauge students' progress so we can measure the impact of Covid and lockdown. We know that some students worked well from home and others did not, so we are using this information to organise additional support where necessary.
- Research shows that the main way to improve student progress is in the classroom so we have been working with teachers on planning and personalised lesson delivery. This, combined with after school support and opportunities for some to have more 1:1 learning during the school day should come into full effect from January.
- Literacy has also been a key focus – improving opportunities to read, listen and write helps students improve across the curriculum. Again, research showed that students across the country fell behind during lockdown with their literacy skills. One older student told me last week that he had really enjoyed the morning registration read with his tutor and said he'd started reading novels again and how much this was helping him in terms of his well-being by not spending as much time on his phone!

With three weeks to go, I can't say that everything has been plain sailing this term but we are in a good position to ensure our 1450 students get a very good all-round education. I would also like to commend our students for their resilience and enthusiasm and the staff for their dedication and professionalism.

Please note that the last day of term will be Tuesday 21 December – the school day will finish at 1:30pm.

Dr Ingate, Principal



# House



## Halloween Charity Day

On Friday 22 October, we completed our first charity day of the year!

We are slowly introducing events and activities in to our charity days. This time we had Mini Halloween Cupcakes for sale, Halloween themed sweet bags and also Halloween themed festival glitter (which seemed to be super popular!).

Please enjoy the photos below of the day.

During our activities we managed to raise £1701.59. This money will be split between our two charities for this year St Clare's Hospice and Sparkle Malawi.

Thank you to everybody who purchased any of the edible goodies or came in non uniform and donated their £1.

Please look out for information about our Christmas Charity day!



### Upcoming events..

#### December

Decorate a form room

Monday 20 December - Non uniform day

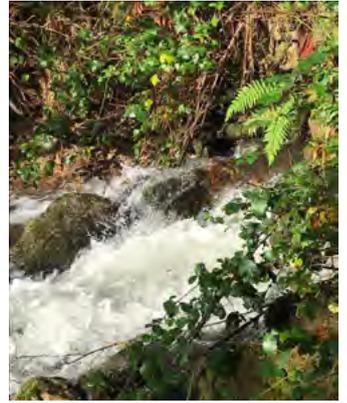
Students are also able to buy via ParentPay the following...

- Christmas themed mini cookies (£1.50)
- Christmas themed mini chocolate bites (£1.50)
- Christmas themed sweet bags (£1.50)
- Christmas themed Festival glitter face paint (£2.00)

### The winners of the Autumn Scenic Competition:

- 1st Place - Lorelei Robson, Year 8  
two amazing entries! 10 House Points
- 2nd Place - Frankie Gilder, Year 11  
5 House Points
- 3rd Place - Jess Lane Year 7  
2 House Points

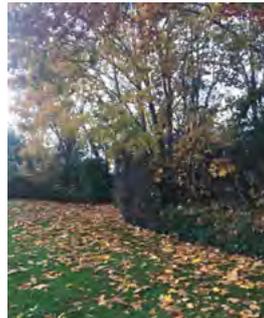
See entries on the next page.....



First Prizes  
Lorelei Robson, Year 8

Second Prize  
Frankie Gilder, Year 11

Third Prize  
Jess Lane, Year 7



Alfie Elliot, Year 8

Ava Price, Year 9

Cherrie Ho, Year 8

Kervin Sunassee, Year 8



Cheuk Kan Chan, Year 10

Findlay Smith, Year 10

Lucy Morrfield, Year 10



Frankie Gilder, Year 11

Lorelei Robson, Year 8



Mr Gilkes, Maths

## Izzie's Breakfast Challenge 3 @ Birchwood!

Izzie King decided in 2017, she wanted to do some good in the world, aiming to feed 1000 homeless people breakfast, so, she did. Then in 2019, she decided to do it again, but even bigger this time.

In 2021, Izzie is bringing the challenge to Birchwood, and needs your help to collect as much food as possible, especially after so many people have suffered during the pandemic. If everyone could bring in a few items each, we can achieve so much with your help!

First time Izzie, managed to collect 1306 food items, and £146 cash donations, all given to Whitechapel Mission, London, who then cooked the breakfasts! This charity has been helping homeless people for the past 140 years.  
2nd time round, Izzie collected over 1,500 food items and raised £700 as seen on ITV news.

For Izzie's Breakfast Challenge 3, we need your help!!!!

Here is the list of required items:

Peanut Butter  
Squash  
Baked Beans  
Biscuits  
Plum Tomatoes  
Sugar  
Coffee  
Honey  
Instant Hot Chocolate  
Breakfast Cereal  
Pepper  
Brown Sauce  
Pot Noodles  
Tea  
Chocolate Spread  
Toothbrushes  
Shaving Foam  
Razors  
Hand Cream  
Face Cream  
Shampoo  
Deodorant  
Soap

When you donate goods, food to The Whitechapel Mission, you impact the lives of the poor and homeless in London. This year, our donors and volunteers helped The Whitechapel Mission provide more than 346,536 meals, 34,000 bags of groceries, and 278,541 articles of clothing to men and women in desperate need of help. We rely on donated food and clothing to meet these important needs. We do not operate charity shops! Anything donated to the Whitechapel Mission will be given directly to people in need. Please watch this amazing film about what they are doing to help people over Christmas. <https://youtube/zjubW2ENuWk>  
<https://whitechapel.org.uk/img/socialmedia/breakfast2.mp4>  
<https://whitechapel.org.uk/img/socialmedia/breakfast3.mp4>

We are going to be collecting items from now until Friday 4 December. The volunteers from White Chapel Mission will then be coming to Birchwood to collect the items. If you are able to spare any of the above items, please can they be brought to school by the students. A green table will be placed in the old reception area next to the library. Students should enter this area via D block and the library as this area is locked early in the morning.

Mrs A Collyer  
Head of the House System



## Staff Bake off!



1st Place



2nd Place



3rd Place

Thank you to everybody who got involved with the Staff Bake Off this year.

A special thank you to everyone who baked, judged or donated.

The winners are listed below:

- 1st place is Miss Cuddington with her Reindeer mint chocolate cake
- 2nd Place is Mrs De Graaf with her orange and almond cake
- 3rd Place is Miss Long with her Kinder Beuno cookies

Thursday 30 September was a very important day as many Year 6 students from many different schools came to look around the school, in order to make their final decisions. Dr Ingate spoke many times during the evening and according to students and parents the evening was amazing.

Many of Birchwood's students helped in different departments and it was a very fun evening.

Myself and my friends really enjoyed the evening, answering questions and showing Year 6 students and parents around. In the English Department we asked a few questions to some parents and the answer was either "This was a very good school and they would recommend Birchwood to any parent" or "The speeches given by Year 7 on their first few weeks at Birchwood were amazing".

**Oliver Alexander, Year 7  
BBC Reporter**

In drama club, students from years 7 and 8 have been enjoying fun, games and solving a murder mystery.

Participants have been dressing up, and acting out several different characters. Finally, the mystery has been solved. It turned out to be all of the characters, who plotted together. The best part is that drama club is still going on, so, if you are in year 7 or 8, and you want some fun on your Thursday lunchtimes, feel free to come along for some fun and excitement.  
Thank you for reading

**Alfred Hildrew, Year 7  
BBC Reporter**

*Christmas decoration workshop  
IT'S CHRISTMAS!! Well, in art anyway.  
On Wednesday 10 November, the whole school was allowed to go to C23 and make Christmas decorations with Miss Morrison.*

*We look forward to showing you the finished articles in the next edition.*

*Edward Wilcock, Year 7 BBC Reporter*



## Spotlight on Technology

This year lots of students have been enjoying Technology. There are different types of Technology, Food Tech, Computing, Textiles, Woodwork and Design Tech. This article is going to be about Food Technology...

This term Year 7 have been making lots of different foods such as; Fruit Salad, Minestrone Soup, Apple Crumble, Pasta Salad, Macaroni Cheese, Ragu (Bolognese), Stir Fry, Fairy Cakes, Choc Chip Cookies and Scones. My Favourite has been the Chocolate Chip Cookies. The picture shows me making Fairy Cakes (the recipe is at the end of this article). The reason technology is a great subject is because there is always new lessons and students get to make delicious meals.

### Recipe for Fairy Cakes

2 Eggs  
100g Self Raising Flour  
100g Sugar  
100g Soft Butter  
1tsp Vanilla Essence

- 1) Pre heat the oven to 180 degrees or Gas Mark 6
- 2) Place the flour into a large bowl and add the vanilla essence, butter, sugar and eggs.
- 3) Mix with a wooden spoon until there are no lumps (2-3 minute stirring).
- 4) Divide equally into cake cases - DO NOT OVERFILL.
- 5) Place in the oven for 12-15 minutes until the cakes are golden and they spring back when you push on them with your finger.
- 6) Remove the cakes from oven and set to cool. Be careful not to burn yourself.

**Oliver Alexander, Year 7  
BBC Reporter**

# PE news....



## Students meet Olympian

On Thursday 21 October, 4 of our Year 9 students were invited to Hertfordshire Sports Village to become part of the Inclusion Champions Academy. Neala Goddard-Bird, Harry M, Lily Booker and Madison Mardell, along with 60 other Year 9 students across Hertfordshire, took part in a two hour workshop where they had the opportunity to learn new skills and practise ideas, with a view to offering clubs for targeted groups of Birchwood students. Double Olympian and two times world champion rower, Tony Garbett was on hand to offer guidance and support. Even helping the Birchwood team when they were a member short in the sitting Volleyball event.

All of the students were amazing, Olympian Tony picking out the Birchwood students as being really pro-active and stand-out performers on the day. Look out for the inaugural Inclusion Champions Clubs which will pop up at lunchtimes after half term. They will consist of a range of fun activities in a supportive environment.

Miss Peet, PE



### **Badminton Club** **Tuesday Lunchtime** **1.30 Sports Hall**

Badminton club is a great club to come to if you're bored on a Tuesday Lunchtime. You don't need to sign up you walk in and play, it is great fun! In case you don't know, badminton is like tennis but has a shuttlecock (the thing with feathers on the end) instead of a ball.

Zain Sharma, Year 7 BBC reporter



## Believe in Yourself

After school gymnastics takes place on a Thursday 3.15pm - 4.15pm. At gymnastics we start with a 15 minute warm up/stretch our muscles. Then we get our own mats and lay them out in rows. Last week we had the beam and ropes out, the beam is wooden and quite thin so we laid some mats underneath the beam so it was safe, then Miss Perret taught us how to do a slip on them. I think I did quite well.

I also managed to do a slip on the ropes. To come to Gymnastics you just need to turn up. It takes place every Thursday 3.15-4.15pm in the old gym.

Amber Poole, Year 7 BBC Reporter



'The year 7 boys competed in the District Rugby Tournament finishing in a very respectable fourth position, winning three games and drawing 1 out of 7. Some excellent performances from the students and improvements seen by all.'



Year 9 recently took part in the first Rugby District event for 18 months.

It was great to see such a large team at the competition it was a shame poor light stopped play. However just before October half term the boys beat HRS at home 15-10 with Mason Frost scoring twice and William Clarke scoring once.

### Year 7 Hockey

Birchwood v St Mary's

Great team work and a fun game. Well done to all the girls, it was only our second game and we all did really well, There were some great passes and defence work. We started the game with a great goal from Mia, then one from me. There were great passes and tackles from Jessie, Dolly, Poppy and Lyla in midfield and great defence from Maz, Lexi and Rosie. The second half they managed to score two goals, to end the match 2-2. Well Done to Year 7 B team who put in a good performance.

Jess Dittrich, Year 7

### Year 8 Hockey

Birchwood v St Mary's

We won 3-1 and were super happy, Thanks to the couple of Year's 7 who played with us! The first goal was scored in the first half when Tilly-Anne passed to Mikayla who tapped it. We all cheered. In the second half St Mary's scored a good goal, it was 1-1. As one of the St Mary's girls passed Tilly-Anne intercepted the ball and ran in to score the goal. For our last goal Mia passed to Mikayla who scored. After the game we lined up to say our cheers to the St Mary's team. Mikayla and Mia were picked as the best players which was really good because they are from both year's.

We all played super well and the win was amazing!

Tilly-Anne Brewin, Year 8



---

# District X Country 2021



Senior Boys Cross Country Team came an impressive Third at the recent District Cross Country.



Year 10 Girls Cross Country Team also came an impressive Third.



Year 7 Boys team



Year 7 Girls team



Year 8 Boys team



Year 8 Girls team



Year 9 Girls



Year 9 Boys



Year 10 Team

---

# GENK visit the Football Academy

Genk Football Team had a cool down training session at BSFC after their recent game at West Ham. The Football Academy team enjoyed watching the training session and were able to get autographs and pictures with the GENK players.



Bishop's Stortford FC  
@BSFCTheBlues

We're pleased to announce that academy keeper Toby Bird has signed first team league registration forms and goes straight into the squad. Toby will act as back up to first team keeper Jack Giddens.



Allez  Les Bleus!

Bishop's Stortford Football Club

# ACADEMY RECRUITING NOW!

ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!  
ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!

Academy Players and First Team Squad Members

Toby Bird and Charlie Allum



"I LOVED MY TIME AT THE ACADEMY. IT HELPED ME LEARN AND GROW BOTH AS A PLAYER AND A PERSON. WITH HARD WORK YOU CAN REALLY ACHIEVE GOOD THINGS AND REACH YOUR GOALS."

Jack Thomas, Academy Graduate and First Team Midfielder

ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!  
ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!  
ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!  
ALLEZ! ALLEZ! ALLEZ!

## 2022 / 2023 TRIAL DATES

BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL @ 4.30PM

- December 6th, 2021
- December 13th, 2021
- December 20th, 2021

R&D ADVISORS UK STADIUM @ 6.00PM

- January 11th, 2022 (Open Evening)
- January 18th, 2022

in partnership with  
Birchwood High School

CONTACT SHAN TOMS FOR MORE INFORMATION  
generalmanager@bsfc.co.uk

## STUDY & TRAIN

- Receive A-Level or BTEC qualifications
- Train daily with the club's coaches and participate in the FA Youth Cup
- Pathway to First Team Football
- Play at the 4000-capacity R&D Advisors UK Stadium
- Complete FA Level 1 and Refereeing qualifications



# BSP News...

Tag Rugby Leaders took part in the Birchwood Sports Partnership Year 5/6 Tag Rugby Festival at the Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club. This event was attended by many of the local primary schools. All of the students said was a great event.



Congratulations to the following students who continue to excel in Sports outside of school.

## Judo - Welsh Open

Hannah King won Gold and Ben Nunn won Bronze.

## Canoing

Jack Gaulton, who came fifth in Bishop's Stortford Canoe Clubs Winter Series, in the under-16 boys' kayak in 58.48, was Stortford's fastest paddler on the five-mile course, which went upstream from Southmill Lock to the town centre and downstream to Spellbrook Lock before completing the circuit to Southmill, with three portages along the route.

## ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to Ashley Sutton who won the Indies SPORTS PERSONALITY (sponsored by Tees Law) for being British Touring Car Championship winner for the third time.



It will come as no surprise to most of the students I have taught when I say that I am not a runner. I'm not even a particularly sporty person; I never have been (competitive yes, sporty... no). Walking yes. Running no... but the last two years and the challenges of lockdown have changed that and this October, I surprised myself by meeting three other staff at the start line of the Cambridge Half Marathon. I did this because my mum has been fighting a very rare variant of dementia for a while now and dealing with that has been challenging. In January I took up running as a form of escapism but, less than a year later, I want to put this running to good use. From that start line, I was running, not away from my mum; but for her!

As a family we've had amazing support from friends, family and also, from students and staff at Birchwood. Our biggest form of support has been from Professor Rowe and his team at Addenbrookes. They've supported us through dozens of meetings, even accepting phone calls in Australia when things have left my mum hospitalised in the UK. We couldn't have asked for or got better support than we have got from his team through the NHS and that's why I found myself alongside Mr Noblett, Mrs Chapman and Miss Payne on the starting line of the Cambridge Half Marathon. I didn't finish as fast as the other teachers, but I was pleased to be within 15 minutes of the PE Department, finishing in 2 hours 11 minutes, a mere two hours and a minute faster than I was at this distance back in January and a 42 minute PB compared to my training sessions.

I found it very hard, pushing myself to train for a sustained period, I felt exactly the same as my DofE Participants, forcing myself to do the physical activity on a regular basis and fitting things into an already busy schedule, however, on race day it was worth it, careering around the landmarks of a city I grew up in and hurtling past the crowds of people, cheering me on, cheering Alzheimer's Research UK on. Helping me fight for my mum and her brain. Running the race was painful, but it is nothing compared to what my mum has put herself through in trying to help research into this disease. My run has raised over £3,000 for research into Alzheimer's, PPA and other brain conditions and I'd be hugely grateful if anyone else in the Birchwood community would be willing to donate to this fantastic cause [https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/wi-liam-morton1?utm\\_source=Share-this&utm\\_medium=fundraising&utm\\_content=wi-liam-morton1&utm\\_campaign=pfp-email&utm\\_term=8e30a-88be5b3444f8a296160a3ef31dd](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/wi-liam-morton1?utm_source=Share-this&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=wi-liam-morton1&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=8e30a-88be5b3444f8a296160a3ef31dd).

*Mr Morton, Humanities*



# Congratulations to all our DofE Bronze students



Congratulation to all the above students who recently received their Bronze DofE Badges and certificates.  
Well Done everyone!

*Mr Morton, DofE Corodinator*

## Year 10 start their journey to achieve Bronze!



One of the main events our school runs is the Bronze and Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. During your Bronze DofE scheme you will have to do 3 months of 2 sections and 6 months of 1 section, these sections include; volunteering, physical and skills. Another part of your DofE award is an expedition. Your expedition is two days and one night. I completed my DofE expedition recently. On Saturday the 9 October I met everyone at our starting location, after an hour or so of training and extra info we set off on day one of our expedition! My group of 6 people walked for six and a half hours. Once we

arrived at the Birchwood field we started setting up camp for the night. Each group set up their tent(s), after setting up our tent we started cooking dinner on a small gas camping stove, my group had pasta as it was quick to cook and simple. We then all talked about our day and did whatever we wanted to for a few hours. At 22:30pm it was lights out. We woke up in the morning to Miss Lava coming round knocking on our tents, we got ready and changed and then started cooking our breakfast. I saw all sorts of food, I had a porridge pot but I had to admit it was disgusting! At 08:30am my group set off on day two, with our rucksacks on our backs and our map in hand. We walked for seven hours, we then saw the finish line... we had made it! Although DofE sounds like a terrible thing, it is actually a great experience! A few key takeaways from doing my expedition is that you can do anything if you believe in yourself! Although of course I had moments of thinking to myself, "you cannot do this, you're in too much pain" or "why are you walking in the middle of a field with a backpack weighing more than you on your back?", but I also had moments where I thought of what I'm grateful for and compared what I was doing to what some other people have to do, for example, imagine the children that have to walk hours each day there and back just to get some clean water for their family. They do that every single day! DofE is an experience that you either throw yourself in at the deep end and go for it or don't bother. The feeling after completing that expedition is indescribable, all the effort you've just put in has paid off and you can now go sit down! It's crazy to think that one second you are walking through a field of cows with bruised shoulders and sore feet and the next you're sitting down with your friends after completing it! If you are coming up to choosing whether to do your Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's award or not, I say do it, because you will hear people talking about how much fun they had and it really boosts your confidence and awareness of peoples daily life. I want to say a thank you to all teachers involved with the Duke of Edinburgh's programme, so thank you. Mr Morton, Miss Lava and all teachers that helped!

*Emily Edwards Year 10, BBC Reporter*





### 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 (PSFA)

### 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.

### Christmas Tree from Folies

Now that December is nearly here, Folies (formerly Squires) of Stansted located at Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers, CM24 8GE are running their Christmas Tree scheme again this year. If you mention Birchwood when buying a tree, they will kindly donate £5 to the PSFA.

### Birchwood Bonus Ball

Congratulations to Lorna Cook who was the winner of the October draw and won £131.50. Ball 96 was drawn by Mr Gilbank.

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 (£30 for the remainder of the school year for one ball) 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 children. 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.

### PSFA Facebook Page

Please follow us on our Facebook Page 'Birchwood Parents Staff and Friends Association PSFA' and stay up to date with upcoming events and meetings.

### PSFA Preloved Uniform

If you are replacing items of school uniform and the old items are still in good condition, please consider donating good condition items of preloved uniform to the PSFA. Please drop off clean items of uniform to our reception. If you would like to make a purchase of preloved uniform, please email [psfapreloved@gmail.com](mailto:psfapreloved@gmail.com). Please note this email address will be checked once a week and uniform requests available for collection from student reception, upon receipt of payment.

### Other ways to support the PSFA

You can support the PSFA when shopping online with Amazon Smile. Find us on there under Birchwood Parents Staff & Friends Association or by searching our registered charity number 1184425. Alternatively, you can generate free donations to our school at no extra cost to you every time you online shop via TheGivingMachine. Please have a look online [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) and search for Birchwood High School.



**GET festive AT FOLIES**

**PREMIUM CHRISTMAS TREES**  **WREATHS GIFTS & MORE!**

**Folies**  
PLANTS • GIFTS • COFFEE

Find us at  
**CAMBRIDGE ROAD**  
CM24 8GE

**sworders** EST. 1782  
FINE ART AUCTIONEERS

**Parentkind**

**THE BIG PTA CHRISTMAS RAFFLE**

**Bring a little sparkle and festive cheer this year!**

**WIN UP TO £5,000**

**£3 ticket enters you in all 12 draws**

- \* Help boost PSFA fundraising
- \* Tickets cost just £3
- \* 12 chances to win up to £5,000
- \* PLUS! A special prize draw worth £2,500 for all PTAs selling 120 tickets or more!

Help raise funds  
12 chances to win

To buy tickets, visit: [bigptaraffle.co.uk](https://www.bigptaraffle.co.uk)  
and search for: Birchwood High School

**Don't delay - buy your tickets today!**

It is illegal for anyone under 16 years of age to purchase or sell raffle tickets. Anyone under 16 years of age who buys a ticket for the Big PTA Christmas Raffle will immediately forfeit the right to any prize. Closing date 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021. A raffle is a form of gambling. If you, or someone you know, needs information and/or help with a problem gambling, please call GamCare on 0845 6000 133 or visit [www.gamcare.org.uk](http://www.gamcare.org.uk)

Tickets are £3 each and available via the link below: <https://www.bigptaraffle.co.uk/support/birchwood-high-school-cm23>

Birchwood High School presents

**Carols by Candlelight**



Wednesday 15 December 2021, 7:00pm  
St Michael's Church, 1 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford

Mince pies will be served

No tickets necessary

There will be a collection in aid of St Michael's Church

**It's time to order your child's Christmas Lunch!**

Year 7 only -  
15 December

Year 8, 9, 10, 11 and Sixth Form –  
16 December

Please order on ParentPay before Monday  
6 December.

Roast Turkey with pigs in blanket, stuffing  
and (GF) Gravy

Or

Nut-less Roast Slice with (GF) Gravy  
rosemary roast potatoes, honey roast  
parsnips, marmalade roasted brussels  
sprouts, baby carrots, red cabbage with  
apples, redcurrants and spices.

Chocolate star or Christmas pudding with  
custard

Fruit juice and Christmas cracker

**ONLY £4.00!**

# Library Update

Congratulations to Jonathan Crick from 7ARE who was the lucky winner of last half term's 'Read, Review, Reward' competition. Jonathan read and reviewed *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone and gave the book an overall rating of 8/10.

Jonathan is pictured collecting his prize, a £10 Waterstones voucher.

Mrs Gibson, Library Resource Manager



If you want to return any outstanding books they can be returned to the return box via the Library - NO questions asked.



**Birchwood Book Club**

Friday lunchtimes  
13:30 – 14:00  
Run by Mrs Gibson and Miss Lava

Come to Birchwood Book Club and fill your minds with the wonder within books. Write reviews, enjoy the Carnegie shadowing and put your creativity towards book themed arts and crafts. We will be discussing your favourite books and you can enlighten everyone with your opinions. Run by Mrs Gibson and Miss Lava, this lunchtime club lets you delve deep into a vast array of wonderful books written by all your favourite authors.

The flyer features a title in a wooden frame, a cloud-shaped text box, a paragraph of text, a small photo of people reading, and a row of book covers at the bottom.

# Book Review by Miss Lava

The novel *Love from A-Z*, follows two young adults, Adam and Zayneb as they traipse through the mess that is their adolescent lives. Adam is dealing with his recent diagnosis of MS and trying to figure out how he tells his family. Simultaneously, Zayneb is being boxed by her teachers as angry, a problem at school, disruptive and unteachable, when

actually she is ostracised at school by a teacher whose political views are drenched in ignorance and islamaphobia. Our protagonists' worlds collide in the airport on their way to Doha, when their minds are at breaking point and all they need is a little bit of colour and new paths.

Firstly, the way the different ways Islam is perceived and portrayed in different countries is so brilliantly done in this novel, specifically the issues pertaining to women and the wearing of hijab. I loved Zayneb's discussion on why she chooses to wear hijab and how hijab doesn't stop her from being a normal girl with normal feelings, aspirations and desires. I think it was wonderfully discussed and for that alone the book is worth reading. She especially addresses the way women are seen as victims of this religion, a religion that actually promotes peace and is widely misunderstood in western countries. Thus she dispels a lot of the common misconceptions people have because of how uneducated and eurocentric their knowledge of the world is.

In addition, and not in any way second best, Adam's portrayal of a young man who seems to have found out of a disease that will change his life forever was also beautifully done. We go through his hopes, fears, despair and the fact that he resigns himself to not having a life to then finding the strength to adapt his life to care for his illness and needs and it was truly inspiring. Resilience is something that lacks in the young generation, and seeing Adam overcome this with the support of not only his family, but his faith and sheer determination and thirst for life, was truly aspirational, a message to all young people who are struggling and feel like the world is too harsh on them.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and would recommend it.

*Miss Lava, English*

## Struggling to find something to read?...

Not sure which book to choose?...

... If so pop into the library this December and borrow one of our specially selected titles.

The Birchwood Elves aka the Birchwood Book Club members have been busy wrapping a wide range of books ready to go underneath the Christmas tree.

Simply choose a gift wrapped book, take it to the issue desk so Mrs Gibson can issue it, then unwrap and enjoy... You may well find yourself reading something you would never normally select.



# READ, REVIEW, REWARD!

**Birchwood's Half-Termly Reading Competition!**

**Read as many books from the reading lists as you can.**

**Win 5 points for every book that you read & review!**

**To enter, submit your review to Miss Lava in D7**

**OR Mrs Gibson in the Library**

**OR**

**email it to [dmiguellava@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:dmiguellava@birchwoodhigh.org.uk)**

**[jgibson@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:jgibson@birchwoodhigh.org.uk)**

**At the end of every half term the students who have completed the most reading will be entered into a prize draw for a**

**WATERSTONES VOUCHER!**

# GEOGRAPHY News....

This trip took place to the River Rib, in Standon. It was on 5 November. X side and Y side went at different times, so that the river wouldn't get too crowded. X side went period 1, 2 and 3, and Y side missed period 4, lunch and 5. This was a lot of planning from Mrs Franklin! All of Year 8 attended, which means roughly 240 students! The trip was amazing, well organized, interesting and interactive! Here's why: Before we got to the river, we had to get there! So, we had a nice coach trip and a short walk. Once all the teachers were set up, all forms moved to their own first activity. Mine was with Mrs Franklin, measuring width and depth of the river. We also measured how fast the flow was. My second activity was seeing different species of grass, flowers etc with Miss Waring. There was a lot of grass and mud! My third activity was with Miss Diver, labelling a picture of the River Rib with geographical terms. My last activity was the best with Dr Ingate, we measured the angle of the valley sides, the side we were on was almost like a hike!

Overall, a great trip, well planned and very fun.

*Edward Wilcock, Year 8 BBC Reporter*



## Year 12 geographers have been studying redevelopment sites.

In November, the Geography department took a group of 27 Year 12 students to East London to complete fieldwork techniques which will help them prepare for their coursework next year. The aim of the trip was to compare how different areas have been redeveloped and what impact this has had on the human and physical features of the areas. The first area we visited Hackney Wick, followed by the Olympic Park, Westfields and the Old Stratford Centre. Fieldwork techniques carried out including environmental quality surveys, questionnaires, pedestrian counts, land use surveys and field sketches. Pupils were able to see the clear differences that the 2012 Olympic investment has made to the area compared to the area which hasn't seen development through their fieldwork methods, and collected some really good data. We were very lucky with the sunshine and even managed to beat the traffic on the way home; it is great to be able to take pupils back on trips after so long without them.

*Miss Crossley, Humanities*





Rehearsals are coming along for The Wizard of Oz production. Some tickets are still available please book via your ParentPay account.

Tuesday 7 December to  
Friday 10 December



## Birchwood News Sixth Form introduction

Introducing the new Sixth Form edition of the monthly Birchwood News, where we tell you about our amazing Sixth Form. Sixth Form is a special place to us, notably our community within it, as we are also able to work together as a group. We are here to show you how special it is to be in Sixth Form and inspire students to join us.

Last month we had our Open Evening, where we presented the subjects to the students who aspire to take A Levels and BTECs, as we have a wide range of subjects that are very enjoyable.

November has been quite special for Sixth Formers, as some of the students have been able to go on trips; Geography, students visited the Olympic Park in Stratford. Sociology students attended the crime and deviance conference, Spanish students attend a film festival in London.

*Sam Winder, Year 12 BBC Reporter*



# YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIAL PRESCRIBING EVENT

Saturday 4th December  
10am - 4pm



Thirst Café  
www.thirstcafe.com

The Stort Valley and Villages Primary Care Network and Thirst Café will be hosting an event for parents and young people who want to know more about health and wellbeing support in the local area.

The event will comprise of a range of stalls in the Thirst Café, manned by experts and local GP's who can provide detailed information on local interventions and support for young people and families who are struggling with a range of challenges such as:

- High Levels of Anxiety
- High Stress Levels
- Low Attainment and Exam Anxiety
- Separation Anxiety
- Poor Quality Sleep
- Fears Regarding the Future, Uncertainty and Change
- Low Self-Confidence
- Poor Quality Relationships
- High Levels of Anger
- Issues Regarding Screen Time and Video Games
- Anxiety Around Weight and Eating
- Issues Around Substance Misuse

The event will also showcase the work of the Young People's Social Prescription Service. This organisation was created in 2019 to ensure that young people and families gain quick access to interventions that improve physical and mental health.

To access this service, you must be registered with one of the SVV PCN Surgeries.

SUPPORTED BY:



## ORDER OF THE DAY

**11am - 11.45am** - Young People's Social Prescription Service Director Ben Nesham and Family Wellbeing Health Coaching Service Director Ed Anthony will be giving an introduction to their services. This will be followed by a Q&A session

**12pm - 1pm** - Local GP's will be discussing COVID vaccines and general local initiatives. This will be followed by a Q&A session

**1pm - 1.30pm** - Thirst and its impact on the local community

**2pm - 3pm** - Local health specialists will be answering questions and discussing their work

**3pm - 4pm** - Meet the team

## Attwaters Jameson Hill:

Josie Rogers and Joyti Henchie, representatives from Attwaters Jameson Hill, came to Birchwood High School on the 16 November 2021 to present the paths and daily challenges of being a solicitor. They also demonstrated the routes you can take to become a solicitor either through the university route or to go through the work experience route such as a Paralegal.

Attwaters began in 1901 in London, Loughton, and Harlow. They merged with Jameson Hill to make Attwaters Jameson Hill and then further merged with Stafford Young Jones on the 1 November 2019. The sectors they work in are commercial, corporate, dispute resolution, family, property, wills, and accidents.

From my perspective it was very beneficial, as a student who is currently interested in pursuing law and the various routes I can go down to become a solicitor. It gave me an insight into the world of law and how challenging it is, but how enjoyable it can be. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to meet them and hope to participate in work experience with them next year.

*Ben Truemen Year 12*





# London Spanish Film Festival

Spanish A level and Year 11 students recently attended the London Spanish Film Festival, which took place at the Ciné Lumière in South Kensington.

We met at Bishop's Stortford train Station at 3.35pm and travelled into London via train and the tube. We arrived in plenty of time to be able to grab a bite to eat before making our way to the cinema on foot. It was so great to be in London again after so long!

We chose the film "La Isla de las Mentiras" (Island of Lies) which had a very unusual but interesting storyline. It was about a shipwreck off the coast of a small Galician island and how the people dealt with the incident, with lots of twists and turns. I enjoyed the whole experience of watching the film in Spanish; it made me think about the cultural aspects involved and how the film was made (we study a film as part of our course). This trip was also very helpful in terms of developing my listening skills, and being totally absorbed in something different. I would recommend this trip to any Spanish student as it was beneficial and an enjoyable experience. We will look forward to the next one!

*Alice Peacock, Year 13*

---

## Year 13 at South Mill Arts

The business trip to South Mill Arts that took place on the 20 October 2021 was an eye-opening and extremely informative event that gave all business students an insight into the working world and the different aspects of working life. During the event we visited each of the stalls asking various questions about different aspects of their business e.g their business culture, business environment and working relationships. While talking to the different stall holders we had the opportunity to network with various businesses, asking about career opportunities that they offer and possible post 18 opportunities that their companies could provide for us for September 2022. The event overall was extremely helpful and enjoyable and all the students thoroughly enjoyed it.



*By Archie Humphreys, Year 13*

Saturday afternoons  
In term time  
Classes start at 2.30pm,  
Birchwood High School

SEE YOUR CHILD'S SELF ESTEEM SOAR

# THEATRE TRAIN

DANCE  
ACT  
SING

Outstanding weekend performing arts  
classes in **acting, dancing &  
singing** for 3-18 years



SCAN ME

For more info scan the QR code or  
e: [bishopsstortford@theatretain.co.uk](mailto:bishopsstortford@theatretain.co.uk)

COMMUNICATION - RESILIENCE - CONFIDENCE - SELF ESTEEM  
EMPATHY - TEAMWORK - FOCUS - COURAGE