

BIRCHWOOD *News*

newsletter@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

HEADLINES



Dear Parents/ Carers,

I would firstly like to say a big thank you to parents and carers for all your support throughout the Autumn and Spring Term. It has been a largely uninterrupted period where we have been able to get back to what we're good at; face-to-face teaching and learning and organizing extra-curricular events and activities - which this edition of Birchwood News is full of. From our excellent Year 10 Mathematicians, to World Book Day and our big push on literacy this year to an extraordinary set of sporting victories over other local schools, we would not have been able to achieve any of this without your support. International Research from the OECD shows that parental support and engagement with their child's education contributes up to 60% of what a child achieves at the age of 16, with the remaining 40% deriving from inherited characteristics and school-led support. Examples of parental support are many but include –

for example – 94% participation at an on-line Year 9 parent evening when we had to switch from virtual to remote at short notice due to the recent spike in Covid cases in our local area. Although our Covid student absence rate has come down to small numbers, we are so grateful for your continued vigilance and lateral flow testing. This will become more difficult after Easter when LFTs are no longer free but it has made a difference to our outbreak management so thank you.

Even now, as we all look forward to a well-deserved Easter Break, we have a spike in the number of teachers testing positive for Covid which, unfortunately means they have to take 5 days off and wait until their LFT is no longer positive. This is why from:

Wednesday 30 March Years 9-13 will be in school, whilst Years 7 and 8 will revert to remote learning.

Thursday 31 March Years 10-13 will be in school and Years 7, 8 and 9 will revert to remote learning.

Friday 1 April Years 10-13 will be in school (Please note that school finishes at 1.30pm) and Years 7,8 and 9 will revert to remote learning.

I hope when we come back after Easter, with the nicer weather, we can finally begin to see the back of any disruption caused by the pandemic. The Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 took two years to abate and become endemic, without the high death rate. Medical science was not so sophisticated back then but mobility and travel was less so many epidemiologists feel that the vaccine programme and higher mobility in today's society will mean a similar time-line. Let's hope so as I think we would all like to see the back of this virus.

Finally, it was great to see everyone contributing to our non-uniform day on Friday 25 March with all proceeds going to the Ukraine Appeal. As this European War grinds on, I hope that some kind of peace deal can be brokered as soon as possible to allow the 44million Ukrainians to restore their lives and homeland - and for the Russian Government to realise that the use of military force should have been resigned to the history books of the Twentieth Century.

Enjoy your Easter break, we return to school Wednesday 20 April.

Dr Ingate, Principal

Inside this month's edition: PSFA News ...pages 4 and 5, Library News pages 6, 7, 8 and 9,
Sports News... pages 12 and 13.

Would you like to advertise in Birchwood News?

A one off advert (5cm x 5cm) £25.00, or to advertise for a whole year (8 editions) £100.00

FINANCE

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



News in Brief.....



Year 13 prepare for their next steps...

On Thursday 3 March, Mrs Dervish organised for Karen Charles and Viki Stevens from Services for Young People to come into school and offer a talk about future options for careers in education. They provided helpful advice on how to find and secure these opportunities, how to apply, in what format, and how to prepare for an interview by walking us through good and bad examples in detail. This was a great help to our students who will soon be applying for jobs, work experience and universities.

Mrs Dervish, Business



Year 10 Inter-School Quiz

Do you know the name of an animal's tail that can grip objects, the place in London that the Queen is not allowed to enter, or the number of vertices on a cube?

These were some of the questions that our team of Year 10 students correctly answered in this year's Rotary Club Inter-School quiz.

Our team of Daniel Baines, Sam Chandler, Daniel Howe (captain) and Matthew Reader performed very well in the University Challenge-style contest against four other local school. In a very close match, they lost 140 – 180 against Boys' High.

The four were excellent ambassadors for Birchwood, and did us all proud.

Mr Summers, Maths

PS. The answers are prehensile, the House of Commons, and 8

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Term Dates 2022

Summer 2022

Tuesday 19 April -
Wednesday 20 July

Half Term

Monday 30 May -
Friday 3 June

CPD Days

Tuesday 19 April

2022/2023

Autumn Term 2022

Monday 5 September
(Year 7 and Year 12 only) -
Tuesday 6 September
(Whole School)
Tuesday 20 December

Half Term 2022

Monday 24 October -
Friday 28 October

Spring Term 2023

Thursday 5 January -
Friday 31 March

Half Term 2023

Monday 13 February -
Friday 17 February

Summer Term 2023

Monday 17 April -
Wednesday 19 July

CPD

Thursday 1 September 2022
Friday 2 September 2022
Friday 30 September 2022
Thursday 5 January 2023

MOVE IT

On Friday 11 March 49 students attended 'MOVE IT' – a dance exhibition at the London Excel Centre. (For lots of students this was their first school trip and for others their first one in over two years!) It was great to be back on a coach and seeing the students excited and singing their way to London!

Once we arrived students were free to explore and get stuck in to all MOVE IT has to offer! The bright lights of the entrance run away, the flash mobs and music had them smiling from ear to ear.

The students had booked themselves into a variety of dance classes which they attended throughout the day: From Bollywood to Roller Skating, Contemporary to Musical Theatre – there was a large variety for them to select from and get involved in.

When they checked in with us throughout the day we were seeing glitter and hair braids, selfies with celebrities, new hoodies and t-shirts, hearing tales of their experiences and it was clear they had a great time. A special mention goes to Ami Shad, who signed herself up to freestyle on the 'Improvisation Stage' on her own, in front of a massive crowd! You go Ami!

Thank you to Mrs Dixon, Mr Connor, Miss Adams, Mrs Byers, Mrs Parker and of course Victor the bus driver who all helped Mrs Goddard make this trip happen!

"I was drawn to the main stage at MOVE IT, the dances were unbelievable and the costumes were so stunning!!" Louisa Coulson Year 12.

"I really loved the sense of community MOVE IT brought. The atmosphere was so enthusiastic and motivating" Jorja Ross Year 11.

"Move it was such a brilliant experience!! Going to MOVE IT has made me love dance even more than I already do, it was an amazing opportunity to watch stunning performances all day long and I wish I could go back and do it all again. It's just INCREDIBLE!" Gracie Salmon Year 9

"When we walked in everyone just went silent and their mouths and eyes were open so wide... and I don't think we realised how amazing it would be and look!" Tabitha Hermit Year 10.



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen becomes the first British monarch to reach 70 years on the throne. So, we can celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

How can we get involved?

- There are lots of ways you can take part in The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, whether you are a local authority, school, business, community group, or want to get involved yourself.
- The UK has a long history of organized street parties to celebrate national events, so you could organise one for your neighbourhood! You could also do this as part of the big jubilee lunch, which is happening on Sunday 5 June. The idea started in 2009, with the first big jubilee lunch in 2012 with The Queen's diamond jubilee.
- The UK has a long tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, weddings and coronations through beacon lighting. You could get involved with your communities on the evening of the 2nd June.
- You could also take part in The Queen's green canopy, which started in October of last year, which is when the planting season began, until the end of the Jubilee year in 2022. To do this you could plant any type of tree!

To find out more, click this link on how to get involved. (It's a trusted UK Government website)

<https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/get-involved-with-the-platinum-jubilee/>

When did The Queen's reign start?

Queen Elizabeth's reign started in 1952, serving for 70 years this year. In September 2015, she surpassed the record of 63 years and 216 days (about 7 months) on the throne. This record was set by Queen Victoria (The Queen's great-great-grandmother).

How many prime ministers has The Queen seen?

She has overseen a broad spectrum of political leaders during her time. In total, the Queen has seen 14 prime ministers during her 70 year reign as British monarch, including Boris Johnson.

Edward Wilcock, BBC reporter



Why not follow us onFacebook

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) Birchwood PSFA (birchwoodpsfa@gmail.com)

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 and search for Birchwood High School.



The Big Birchwood Quiz

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the recent Quiz Night. 12 tables were sold and a massive £1084.00 was raised towards Birchwood's Resilience Week. The winning team were the Quizards of Oz. A big thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes, to our sponsors Reyland Johnson Estate Agents, and to our awesome Quizmasters Simon and Dave.

Annual General Meeting

The PSFA recently held their AGM. We are still without a Chairperson.

If you would like more information on this role. Please email birchwoodpsfa@gmail.com

Elected Members;

Secretary - Katie Horwood

Treasurer - Sarah Ficken

Trustee – Kate Byers

Birchwood Bonus Ball

Congratulations to Lorna Cooke who was the winner of the February draw! Ball 89 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 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 to let us know you've paid and how many balls you would like.

The Birchwood Futures Foundation

You would have recently seen on ParentPay an alert for the Birchwood Futures Fund. Please consider contributing a small amount each month. In the words of a well known supermarket 'every little helps!' Donations of any value are voluntary. With your support the PSFA is hoping to play a significant role in helping to keep Birchwood a well-resourced school with opportunities for all students.

The purpose of the Birchwood Futures Foundation (BFF) fund is to help raise additional financial resources to enhance students' educational experience whilst at Birchwood High School. We are hoping to expand assistance to support resources the school does not currently receive dedicated government funding for such as mental health provision and the school minibus.

So far, with your support and donations, the Fund has enabled outdoor canopies and picnic benches to be purchased during the Covid-19 pandemic when each year group were in bubbles at break and lunchtime.

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.

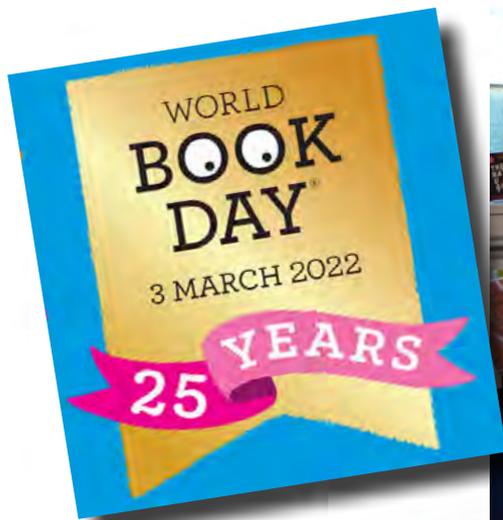
PSFA Preloved Uniform

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. Please note this email address will be checked once a week and uniform requests are 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 and search for Birchwood High School.

Birchwood PSFA (birchwoodpsfa@gmail.com)



Just the ticket!

Students celebrated 25 years of World Book Day by finding Golden Tickets which had been hidden around the school site. The activity, which was based on Roald Dahl's classic book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, was organised by English teachers Miss Long and Ms Cuddington and Librarian Mrs Gibson.

Mrs Gibson, who is a keen advocate of reading for pleasure in order to raise literacy standards among children and young adults said "The school ran a number of activities throughout the day but it was the Golden Ticket challenge which really got the students buzzing. They were extremely excited and eager to get involved. Students from all year groups took part and visited the library to exchange their ticket for a free book and chocolate. World Book Day 2022 will certainly be remembered for a long time to come by students and staff alike".

Quizzers

Ms Cuddington invited students from all year groups to the library during lunchtime on World Book Day to take part in a Harry Potter quiz. 'Quizzers' could compete as individuals or as part of a team for the chance to win chocolate. Competition was fierce and after a series of rounds we had two individuals and one team tying in first place.

Congratulations go to:

Individuals:-

Alex Whitby 7RNN

Vivian Carey 7JJO

Team:

Jessica Newton 11MAS, Chloe McCreary 11BNN, Willow Robson 11EVN, Lucy Robinson 11EVN (pictured).



Guess the character

This year marks 25 years of World Book Day and to celebrate staff were encouraged to dress up as their favourite character from a book or comic strip (pictured right). The students enjoyed guessing the various characters and voting for their favourites. Huge congratulations go to the winners:

3rd place Mr Loney as Bane

2nd place Miss Long as Kate Bishop

And...

1st place Mr Morton as King Edmund

Thanks go to all the staff who took part, either by dressing up or by supporting. It was lovely to see so many students from all year groups getting involved during the day.

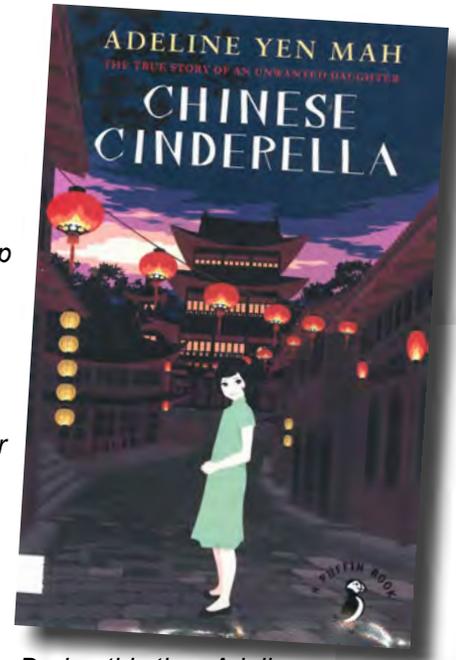
Mrs Gibson, Librarian





Book: Chinese Cinderella
Author: Adeline Yen Mah
Review by: Sophia Coles
(Winner)

The story of 'Chinese Cinderella' is a true story about a young Chinese girl growing up facing the struggles of being unloved and unwanted. Adeline is seen as bad luck because her mother dies days after giving birth to her. Her father re-marries Naing a woman who Adeline would come to hate. As years pass Adeline gets forgotten by her father and stepmother and bullied by her siblings, only finding love and condolence in her Ye Ye and Aunt Baba. Finally, she escapes the house. Torn away from her beloved Aunt Baba and Ye Ye Adeline is sent from boarding school to boarding school as conflict rages through the country. During this time Adeline enters a story competition. She wins. Her father finally notices her and lets her go to study at Oxford in England, although it is not what Adeline wants to study, she is happy to get away from the heartbreak that was her childhood. What I like about this book is that it teaches you to keep your head up high and that you can achieve anything if you set your mind to it, it is very inspirational much like the book 'I am Malala'. I gave this book a 4.5 out of 5. It is a powerful story written to show you just how painful some people's lives are and how they should never give up, and that it will get better.



Congratulations to Sophia Coles from Year 9 who was the lucky winner of last half term's 'Read, Review, Reward' competition. Sophia read and reviewed a selection of books from the reading list – one of her favourites was 'Chinese Cinderella' by Adeline Yen Mah which she rated 4.5 out of 5. This half term's competition 'Out of This World' is now open to all students. For more information on how you can enter please contact Mrs Gibson jgibson@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

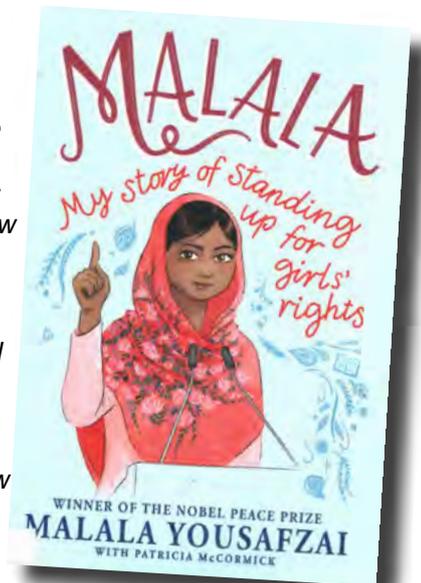
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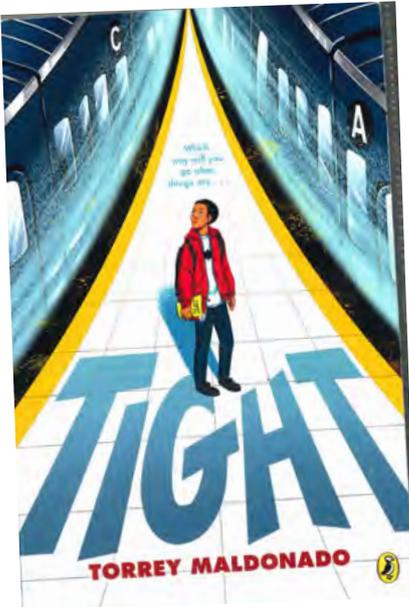
Book: I am Malala
Authors: Malala Yousafzai & Patricia McCormick
Review by: Chloe Allmark (Second place)

I am Malala is an autobiography by Malala herself and Patricia McCormick about all the events that led up to her being shot by the Taliban, and everything after. It shows how families around her were being affected differently, and she talks about her own worries as well. I like the book because it didn't focus on the shooting; instead, it wanted to show how Malala came from a girl who wanted to be top of the class at school, and always wanted her hair perfect, to someone who spoke out for many women's and children's rights, and finally how being shot didn't stop her, and instead helped her to be heard. I also liked how throughout the book, the dialogue included some words from her original language, as this showed you some of her culture, and I also liked how they used a glossary at the end of the acknowledgements. This makes it more realistic, the use of how she was worried about getting up late for an exam, or how she was arguing with her friend made a contrast with the ending, as she talked about women's rights and how children in less fortunate countries struggle, and whilst she is in Birmingham, she also shows the differences between Pakistan and England, and makes you appreciate what you have.

Malala expresses her views strongly around the events in the book, not only how she talks about the Taliban and how she didn't find meeting the royal family interesting, to what she said to different people, such as how she told Obama that he should spend less money on weapons and more on education. However, the Taliban are still punishing people all over Pakistan in devastating attacks, with families losing their lives and children becoming orphaned, abandoned in the streets. I think that it is amazing that Malala got through what she did, but women and children are still suffering, some worse than she did, and we don't know their names or stories. This is the only way the book could be improved; that the story could include everyone's journey, and more inclusive for those being severely hurt in their homes still. This makes me feel she is only well known because of how she survived being shot, not how she has become a voice for women around the world, and she wouldn't be there without the shooting.

I would recommend this book to someone who would like to learn more about Malala's story and open their eyes to how innocent people are suffering under the rule of the Taliban.





Book: Tight

Author: Torrey Maldonado

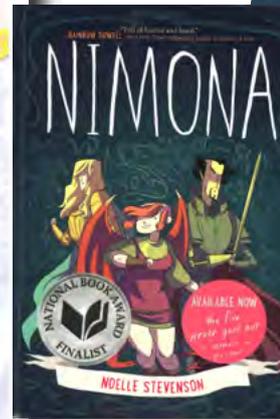
Review by: Alfred Hildrew 7RNN (Third place)

I enjoyed this book for a number of reasons. Firstly, the reference to various comics and brands. I liked how the comics brought the characters together. I think this helps describe the characters by knowing what superhero they want to be, getting the comparisons between the well-known heroes and these characters help you know more about them. Secondly, it's a somewhat repeatable read, although I think some of the events get a bit out of hand like train surfing, the majority is made up of events that people might have been through like school fights or arguments with friends. Finally it is left on a cliff-hanger leaving you with so many questions like what will happen between Mike and Bryan or will Bryan interact more with some of his new friends like Big Will or the girls.

Overall I really enjoyed the book and would highly recommend it.

Half Term 4/5 Book List Out of this World!

- The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill
 - Lore by Alexandra Bracken
- The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
 - Deeplight by Frances Hardinge
 - Raybearer by Jordan Ifueko
 - Green Rising by Lauren James
- The Witch Boy by Molly Knox Ostertag
- We Set The Dark on Fire by Tehlor Kay Mejia
 - The Loop by Ben Oliver
 - Want by Cindy Pon
 - Nimona by Noelle Stevenson
- The Undying Tower by Melissa Welliver



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
OR
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!**

Brandon Atkin, a Birchwood Alumni student, is currently volunteering for a Dolphin and Whale conservation project for the Atlantic Whale and Dolphin Foundation in Tenerife. The project is run by a UK charity called Fair Earth Foundation (charity number 1167109) who are involved in various different projects, to raise funds.

Brandon has decided to take on the Teide Challenge (Teide is the third highest volcano in the world) to raise funds for the Fair Earth Foundation tree planting programme, to help fight against global warming <https://www.fairearthfoundation.org/teide-challenge1.html>.

This is particularly challenging for Brandon as he is only just recovering from knee ACL reconstruction surgery.

The charity aims to plant one million trees this year around the world, as part of their Plant a Tree, Fund a Dream programme (<https://www.fairearthfoundation.org/plant-a-tree-fund-a-dream1.html>).

If you would like to sponsor Brandon, please click on this link https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/brandon-atkin?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=brandon-atkin&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=-4c35a8dd32704545867d2fc0ba67ecfb



**BRANDON'S
FUNDRAISING -
MOUNTAIN HIKE**

**A TREE
FOR THE
FUTURE**

Please sponsor my mountain hike, to raise funds for a tree planting project to help our planet

Please help me to raise funds to tackle climate change and protect our future...

Money raised from my fundraising mountain hike will be used to plant trees...

We need to work together to overcome the climate crisis! With your help We can make a difference.

Please help this good cause...

To make a donation please scan below QR code

**2022 PLANT A TREE
- FUND A DREAM**

[WWW.FAIREARTHFOUNDATION.ORG](https://www.fairearthfoundation.org)
CHARITY NUMBER 1172989



LGBT+ PRIDE MONTH

LGBT stands for:

Lesbian (Woman loving Woman*)

Gay (Man loving Man*)

Bisexual (Someone attracted to both genders)

Trans (Someone who is no longer their birth gender/does not sit comfortably with their birth gender)

Non binary (Someone who does not identify as any gender)

*Some non-binary people may identify as gay/lesbian, as the terms can also be used as:

Lesbian (non-man loving non man)

Gay (non-woman loving non woman)



What is LGBT+ History Month?

LGBT+ History Month is a month-long annual celebration of the LGBT+ Community, including related civil rights movement.

So how can you be an ally today?

To be an ally, you do not have to be a part of the LGBT+ Community. All you must do is respect others, do not discriminate others for their sexuality or how they identify, and demonstrate kindness to others.

Leah Burke and Beth Blake, BBC Reporters



What is Valentine's Day?

Valentine's Day, mostly known as Saint Valentine's Day, is celebrated on 14 February and is a great time for sharing our love and is also a great time to spend time with people we love and care about.

Why do we celebrate it?

Valentine's day is celebrated to honour Saint Valentine (patron Saint of Lovers), a catholic clergyman (priest) who lived in Rome in the third century. Chocolate is given to show our love for whoever we want our valentines to be.

What is its meaning?

In the secular world, valentine's day has been associated with romantic love. It has evolved over time that we get people chocolate, flowers and greeting cards.

In the library it is very valentine's themed as there is a tree full of love hearts of why students from Year 7 – Year 13 love the library. Some say 'It is a place where I can come and study and read.' Another says 'The library is a very welcome place for staff and students.'

Oliver Alexander, BBC Reporter



PE news....



Well done to all the school's Football and Netball teams who took part in the district tournaments and matches this season. Including some noticeable victories:

Under 13's Girls Football won 5-1 against Bishop's Stortford College

Year 8 Boys Football team won 2-1 against HRS

Under 14's Girls Football team won 5-1 against Joyce Frankland

Year 9 Boys Football team won 12-0 against HRS

Year 9 Girls Football team won 5-1 against Joyce Frankland

Year 9 Netball team won 22-7 against Freeman College

Year 10 Netball team won 39-6 against Freeman College

Year 11 Netball team won 19-12 against Joyce Frankland

Meanwhile at the District Tournaments:

Year 9 Boys Football reached the semi finals.

Senior Boys Football Team reached the finals.

All teams represented the school brilliantly and played to a high standard.

The PE department are super proud of you all!

PE Department.

Football...



Senior Football Team reached the final of the District Tournament against Saffron Walden.

Year 9 Boys Football Team came runners up in the District Football tournament at Saffron Walden on Tuesday 22 February. They reached the semi-finals after five wins, two draws and one defeat before beating Boys High in the semi-final by 3 goals to 0. They then lost a competitive and close final 1-0 to Bishop's Stortford College.





Under 14's Girls Football

Football...

U13's Girls Football

Netball...



Year 11 Netball Team



Year 9 Netball Team

Year 10 and Year 11 GCSE PE students climb high!

The PE department, over the course of the past two terms, have been busy making steps to offer a wide range of practical sporting activities to students to use for their assessed performances contributing to their GCSE grades. The course (despite being heavily theoretical) requires learners to undertake practical assessments in a variety of selected sports. Most students already compete in team sports outside of school and indeed attend school clubs in addition to this. Individual sporting activities, being participated in outside of school, however, are still less popular for some students. These students opted for training, support and guidance in rock climbing at The Lock climbing wall, Harlow. The staff at the centre are experienced climbers themselves and well versed on our examination criteria. Mr Clift, Miss Perrett and Mr Barratt undertook monitoring and assessment duties in collaboration with the centre's staff. It was fantastic to see our students grow in confidence, develop their strategic analysis and enhance their communication skills in this area and we look forward to some students selecting climbing as one of their assessed activities for the completion of the course.

Gilbank storms to victory in London

William Gilbank, has won the prestigious 2021-2022 London Track League at the Olympic Velodrome in Stratford. He follows in the footsteps of previous illustrious winners: Ethan Vernon, current Great Britain cyclist and Fred Wright, World Tour Professional cyclist. William is currently on Great Britain's National School of Racing and has aspirations to make it to the very top, with the Olympics a firm target for the 16 year old.

The London Youth Track League is run on a Thursday night at the Velodrome and involves a variety of races from Match Sprints, Points races to the exciting Elimination races. William managed to win nearly all the races and came away the convincing winner, scoring double the amount of points of second place, over the seven nights.

William trains with Great Britain and Lee Valley Youth and he shows his talent not just on the boards of the velodrome, but also on the road. With recent success at the Deux Jours de Cyclopark in Gravesend where he won the overall classification in a weekend involving 4 road circuit races.

William is kindly supported by local Bishop's Stortford companies. Matts Auto Repairs, TLC Live Tutors and Fosters Schoolwear all who have enabled him to get the very best equipment to train and race with. If there is any interest in further supporting William or following his progress through his blog then please see <https://gilbankracing.com/>



Bobby wins Gold!

Bobby King took gold at the British schools championships last weekend in the years 10 and 11 U60kg category representing Birchwood in his final year.



Lauren qualifies for East Region and British National Swimming Championships

Lauren Gore has recently met the qualification times for the East England Region and British National Championships after an outstanding performance at the Hertfordshire County championships in January (2 Silver, 3 Bronze). She is currently 23rd in Britain in her age group for the 50m Breaststroke.

Birchwood Bobcats

Birchwood's new Cheerleading Squad took part in a Display Day last week, demonstrating fearsome formations with an energetic performance of a Pom Pom dance and Cheer routine for family and friends.

Great teamwork from these courageous Cheerleaders, Well done Birchwood Bobcats!



Birchwood's Young Musician 2022

On Thursday 24 February Birchwood's Young Musician 2022 Final was held in the school hall. The competition final, which is in its eighth year, was judged by Mr Peter Foster who is head of Bishop's Stortford Music School. It was a wonderful evening of music and the performances were outstanding. The range of talent on display was inspiring and the final included solo performances on clarinet, flute, piano, saxophone, voice, cello, heavy metal guitar and drum kit. We would like to thank all students who entered the competition, the quality of entries made deciding on the overall finalists exceedingly difficult, and many thanks to Peter Foster for judging the final and Mr Stock for accompanying.

Congratulations to the overall winners who were outstanding -

Musical Theatre

Sophie Springham (voice) - Burn - Hamilton

Classical

Kieren Mok (piano) - Clare de Lune - Debussy

Pop

Lucas Berry (electric guitar) -
Tornado of Souls - Megadeth

The judges would like to thank all the finalists -

Musical Theatre

India Purton
Aimee Suttle
Isabelle Ramsay
Zoe Lloyd-Rossi

Milla Sweett-Heals
Gabriella Crowland
Logan Reid

Well done to all runner ups -

Classical

Matthew Reader
Daniel Howe
Charlie Rowelle
Willow Robson
Angus Mackinlay

Kaley Walsom
Madison Mardell
Matthew Gyarmati
Piper Sweett-Heals
Shamus Entwistle
Sophie Robinson
Silvia Dophin-Tsang
Vivian Carey
William Chandler

Pop

Sophie Byers
Emily Edwards

GCSE MUSIC CONCERT

On Tuesday 22 March 32 of our GCSE Music students attended a GCSE Music Concert at Nobel School in Stevenage. Students were lucky enough to see a performance given by Milton Keynes based Alina Orchestra, organised by Hertfordshire Music Service. The concert was created specifically for GCSE Music students with the aim to help students towards a better understanding of the orchestra and instruments. Students were treated to music by Bach, Purcell and Mozart, with a live narrator explaining how the composers created music using orchestral instruments. Mr Grogan would particularly like to thank Miss Morrison and Mrs Parker for stepping in last minute to take the students.



EPA News in Brief...

Logan Reid, Year 8 has passed his grade 8 drum exam with merit. Well done Logan.

Declan Jones in Year 8 is currently starring in Matilda at the South Mill Arts Centre. He is playing Ms Trunchball.



SCIENCE WEEK

Science Week at Birchwood was a resounding success, with students from all year groups participating and enjoying various activities in Science.

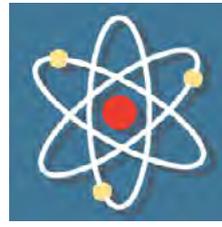
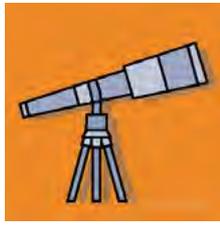
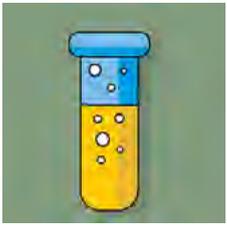
- Monday 14 March, we had the pleasure of welcoming Ms Shruti Vora, a Food Scientist from the Britvic Juice company, who spoke to the whole of our Year 9 cohort about the processes and science involved in making Robinson fruit drinks. Our students showed a keen interest and responded well with thought provoking questions.
- Tuesday 15 March, the whole of Year 10 were constructing hovercrafts in lesson, and investigating the speed and forces involved with the hovercrafts, whilst linking it to ideas from the International Space Station.
- On the same day, our Year 12 students were treated to a careers talk from Lucia Poyatos, Associate Statistical Scientist at Roche (pharmaceuticals). This thought provoking and inspiring session opened our students' eyes to the many career possibilities stemming from a degree in the sciences.
- Ms Lalonge dedicated her time to lead an exciting STEM club each lunchtime, which inspired students to take part in this year's Big Bang science competition.
- Mr Johnson organised a trip for a group of Year 7 and 8 students to attend the Big Bang Fair, hosted by our neighbouring school Herts & Essex. The students returned victorious, as two groups were winners in certain categories, and have now been invited to attend the National Big Bang Fair contest in Birmingham later in the year. One of the groups designed a car that was running and moving on sea water (salt water). Ms Lalonge supported the groups with their presentation displays in her science club sessions.
- Wednesday 16 March, Mrs Pressland challenged students in Years 7 and 8 to build spaghetti marshmallow towers. The background to this STEM activity: There is an increase in the construction of skyscrapers and high-rise buildings to accommodate the growing population and rapid urbanisation in most cities. This activity introduced students to the basic design and engineering principles mainly used in constructing buildings. Students were further introduced to Career ideas such as; Construction, Architectural Technologist, Building Surveyor and Structural Engineer. This tied in nicely with the National Careers Week, which Birchwood celebrated the week before Science Week (7-12 March 2022).
- Mr Johnson also offered an ice cream making session after school, which the students found fun and enjoyable.
- Thursday 17 March, our entire Year 7 cohort visited the local woods to calculate the age of trees and explore the local Biodiversity.
- Mr Briscoe and his team of trusty colleagues took half of the Year 9 cohort (Y-side) to the British Science Museum in London, to investigate scientific concepts (a separate trip ran a week later on 23 March for the X-side).
- Finally, on Friday 18 March, all of our Year 8 students experimented with making biodegradable plastic from milk. The science behind it - Milk contains molecules of a protein called Casein. Students carried out an experiment using warm milk and acid. During this reaction, the casein protein molecules unfold from their usual shape and form long repeating chains, which in science we call a polymer, rather like plastic. The polymer can then be moulded and shaped which makes it a plastic.
- Year 11 students were treated to a guest speaker Dr Donna Arya who is a Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and spoke to the students about her role in the healthcare sector. Dr Arya also suggested some stress management techniques for their upcoming exams. A very worthwhile talk.

Furthermore, throughout the week, all faculties across school delivered a science themed concept in their lessons, which included a science quiz. Form tutors also encouraged students to take part in the National Science Week poster competition too. Such a great week of science!

Mr Johnson, Science



Students taking part in the Big Bang Competition



The Winner of the junk modelling competition with Mr Loveday is Alfie Nixon-Harman Year 7 with Wall-E. Well done to everyone who took part during science week.

Mr Loveday, Science



Tree hugging in the name of Science

Year 7's have been finding out the age of local trees, by measuring and using calculations as part of science week activities.

Mr Loveday, Science

Primary School visit for Science Week

In celebration of this years British Science Week, I was fortunate enough to be invited to Little Hadham Primary School to immerse pupils in Year 6 with all things science. Pupils had been learning about food chains as part of their Ecology topic and so I continued with the theme of food chains, producers and photosynthesis.

Pupils excitedly investigated oil on the surface of water to simulate an oil spill in ecology. Pupils then experimented with ways to clear up the oil from the waters surface, from containing it to a smaller area, to using cotton wool, dish soap, pipettes, cardboard and syringes. They dipped feathers in oil to simulate sea birds caught in a spill and discussed the effects on the birds, including investigating how the mass of the oil-drenched feather increased and caused it to sink below the water surface. All the while, pupils were able to link their big ideas back to the central theme of food chains.

I also introduced the class to the pH scale and explained how to test soil samples for acidity. Pupils linked this learning to their knowledge of how plants are the producers at the start of every food chain. They were able to test different soils for acidity, and link back to how plants may not grow if soil is too acidic.

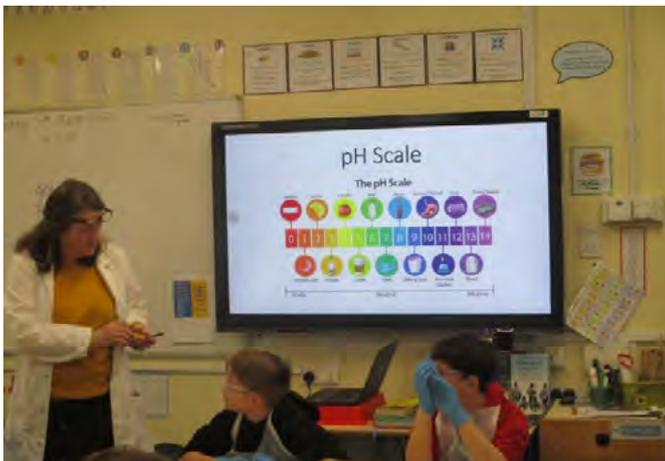
Mrs Tweedale, Year 6's class teacher gave such positive feedback:

"The children, and staff, loved the activities and learnt so much. It really was great to hear the super vocabulary the children were using and how they were linking their new learning with the knowledge they have already.

The children were still buzzing at the end of the day and could tell me all about photosynthesis, producers in the food chain, and all about the pH scale! Wow! You really did make them feel like 'real' scientists and have inspired them to go on to try out further investigations!"

Science is all about discovery. It is about asking questions and understanding our world through observation and experiment. Primary school visits like these are excellent, to not only develop strong links with our feeder primary schools, but to also connect with students. Research shows that when students see that scientists are real people like themselves, they are more likely to participate in science and consider science careers. A fantastic morning was had by all.

Mrs Pressland, Science



SCIENCE WEEK

What a difference a trip makes! Year 9 visit the British Science Museum

The sun shone, making it a fantastic day for a trip out. For some of our Year 9 cohort, this marked their first school trip in quite some time! For others, it was their first ever secondary school trip following long periods of lock-downs and social distancing.

Our entire year nine cohort were offered the opportunity to join the coach trip to the British Science Museum in London. Whilst being split across two visits, one for the X-side and one for the Y-side, uptake was fantastic, and the excitement in the morning between our students was evident as they boarded the coach to go.

On arrival, groups were each given a map and itinerary which were designed to ensure that they maximised their trip by visiting and experiencing as many of the displays and interactive exhibits as possible.

Some of the key attractions that we visited included;

The Flight zone - where overhead walkways allowed students to get up close to aeroplanes suspended in the air.

Students examined exhibits from the pioneer days of aviation, including the world's most authentic Antoinette monoplane (1909), Amy Johnson's Gipsy Moth and the Vickers Vimy, which first flew across the Atlantic in 1919.

The Engineer Your Future zone - An interactive exhibition to get students thinking about their futures, where challenges, games and films helped them to understand what engineers actually do.

A particular favourite was the Energy Hall zone, where students discovered how steam power shaped the modern world.

The Clockmaker's exhibit - This showcased the world's oldest clock and watch collection. The collection included more than 600 watches, 90 clocks, 30 marine chronometers and a number of fine sundials, mapping the history of innovation in watch and clock making in London from 1600 to the present day. Amazing!

A favourite with Mr Briscoe (trip organiser and science faculty lead) was the Science City: The Linbury Gallery. This exhibition told the story of how science was integral to the transformation of London, post the 1800's, into a global city and a world-leading centre of Science. With 650 square metres of gallery transformed into an abstract cityscape, students immersed themselves in a contemporary interpretation of historic London.

All in all, a fantastic experience for our students, I am sure you will agree! Check out the photographs below.

The Science Faculty



The farmed salmon dilemma

For the science week I thought I would investigate the ecological issues of farmed salmon and why it poses a dilemma when accounting for human food demand.

Salmon farms undermine the main lifestyle of salmon, typically wild salmon travel thousands of miles in a lifetime but the farmed salmon are confined to a small, cramped enclosure. Farmed salmon are selectively bred to grow quickly to satisfy human food demands. They are also fed food they would not normally eat intended to produce the most salmon meat which results in farmed salmon being twice as fat as their wild counterparts. Salmon farms are subject to disease. 25% of salmon die in fish farms due to the conditions. Fish farms are an ideal feeding ground for sea lice, which eat salmon alive and have been a major issue for salmon farm management. An ecological solution to the sea lice issue is the introduction of wrasse, a natural predator of sea lice, not only is this cost effective but it also reduces the need for chemicals.

The cramped conditions of the fish farms make it an ideal breeding ground for disease. In response the salmon are given antibiotics. However, this contaminates surrounding water and can have adverse effects on wild species in surrounding waters and may result in antibacterial resistance if unmanaged. It is also possible for the salmon to escape which may affect the gene pool of wild salmon which could impact other ecosystems.

However despite having adverse ecological and ethical impacts, farmed salmon plays a vital role in sustaining food security. Farmed salmon are mass produced and therefore affordable to most people and while it is not as healthy as wild salmon nutritionally it is still better than other processed foods. 40% of the world's seafood is harvested from aquaculture. They are also a solution to the overwhelming fish demand and can sustainably fulfil growing seafood demand without further overfishing. Farmed salmon has major ethical and health concerns but despite this it is a stable solution to the world's food demand and would have adverse effects if abolished.

Daniel Alferi, BBC Reporter



To celebrate Women's History Month we asked staff members to nominate inspirational female colleagues. These are some of the responses we got:

Miss Peet - runs spin classes, yoga classes and boot-camps on top of teaching and her School Games Organiser role. She also ran weekly HI-IT online Zoom classes for free for Birchwood staff during the last lockdown.

Mrs Dervish - has helped charity by purchasing and organising stationary sets for deprived families and children in Tunisia. Along with her children she has created 130 stationary packs which included pens, pencils, rulers, rubbers and sharpeners (pictured above).

Mrs Tooze - has suffered with significant health and injury problems over the past few years - from mysterious medical symptoms that have left the experts baffled, to a full knee reconstruction. Despite numerous setbacks, she never complains and remains committed to finding full fitness again. She is a brilliant mum to her two boys and is a very active member of the parents' association in her sons' school.

Miss Lava - As well as teaching, is writing not one but three books in her spare time.

Miss Wade - works full-time at Birchwood as an LSA. She is a single mother of 4 children aged: 2, 3, 8 and 12 and is also studying for a degree in psychology with counselling at the Open University.

Mrs Gibson - is one of the directors at The Aviatrix Project which supports women, girls and those from disadvantaged backgrounds to help them into careers in aviation.

Miss Diver - Regularly writes articles for geographical publications.



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National Careers Week Activities

To celebrate National Careers Week, Mrs Crimes encouraged all the students to take part:

Year 7 were challenged to get logged into their Unifrog account and explore the Careers Library and choose three job roles they find interesting.

Year 8 Teachers were challenged to link their subject to careers during the course of the week to help students make connections in the run up to choosing their GCSEs.

Year 9 students who joined the live session with Joe Wicks, MBE, talking about his career journey thought it was '... inspirational' and '... very helpful'.

Year 10 were asked to join the Unifrog Virtual Careers Fair and those that did found the event useful. Anyone who missed the fair can watch the recordings of the sessions although, unfortunately the recording of the Joe Wick session is no longer available!

Year 11 Were treated to a short assembly led by Rich introducing them to the NCS summer programme. Mr Noblett was keen to know what Rich had for breakfast as he led the assembly with so much energy.

Year 12 UCAS Exhibition

The Year 13 students who are planning to follow an apprenticeship or employment pathway when they finish in the summer had a session on CV writing led by Hannah from Eurovia – the students are looking forward to welcoming Hannah back this week for a session on Employability.

Mrs Crimes

UCAS trip report

**BIRCHWOOD
BROADCASTING
CORRESPONDENTS**

On the 14 March Year 12 went to the ExCeL centre in London to attend a UCAS exhibition. Over 167 universities, colleges, employers and apprenticeships were confined in a large room in addition to live talks covering subjects such as personal statements and areas which covered aspects of student life. The event gave the Year 12's excellent guidance on post A level opportunities and would have been the perfect trip for one who was content with going to university. There was a broad selection of universities ranging from Cambridge to Brighton, practically all the UK universities were under one roof, which is a rare and special opportunity. I also feel it is worth mentioning the ExCeL centre was a superb venue. It was large and spacious, like that of an airport, and was very nice to be in. While there was a satisfactory selection of apprenticeships boasting organisations such as Dyson and the NHS, I would have personally wished for a wider selection of apprenticeship stands as apprenticeship programs at the event felt more like an extra rather than a main attraction. Those who plan on going to university would have easily run out of time in the exhibition hall due to the vast choice of stands to see, in other words the trip would be essential to them. In addition, those who are unsure would have benefited greatly from this trip because of the vast quantity of stands and the guidance available at the event through the live talks. However, those who plan to go onto something other than university would have far less to see at the event and may benefit less. Despite this I think all groups have benefited from this trip and have received great guidance and inspiration on what to do after A levels in addition to ample freebies.

Daniel Alferi, Year 12 BBC Reporter



Walking Cricket

**has arrived in
Bishop's Stortford.**

Walking Cricket is a great way to exercise, suitable for all ages, especially the over 50's and is totally inclusive.

Taking up Walking Cricket can inject a buzz of energy into your life on and off the pitch.

Meet new friends in a safe, friendly environment.

No running but lots of fun...

Come and join us on Tuesday evenings at Birchwood High School, Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford.

6.30pm - 7.30pm.

Cost £5 per session, tea and coffee supplied.

Contact: Sean 07849 973451 seancarey780@me.com
Richard: 07818 431144 richard.hill@ecb.co.uk

Birchwood Walking Cricket Club

Over the last two months, I have been lucky enough to work with the Birchwood Walking Cricket Club. Sessions run every Tuesday evening in the sports hall at Birchwood High School from 5.45pm - 6.45pm, and has grown from one person to approximately ten people.

Their ages range from 60 to 81, and the common theme for most of them is that they thought their cricket playing days were behind them. The group is now developing into a proper team; the brew and a biscuit afterwards playing a big role in the fun they have and the camaraderie that is building. The sports hall at Birchwood is a great space, brilliantly managed by Kate and the friendly staff, who incidentally had a go this week, and enjoyed it enormously.

Our goal is to set up another three hubs across Hertfordshire. The next one is likely to be at Letchworth and we are hoping to start this in the next few weeks.

If you fancy revisiting your cricketing days and socialising with a similarly minded group, drop me a line to seancarey780@me.com or call me on 07849 973451.

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If you decide to use this estate agent, please don't forget to mention Birchwood High School!

They have offered to make a donation from their fee to Birchwood, for anyone selling their property with links to our school.