



BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL BIRCHWOOD BULLETIN

16/06/25

YEAR 7	YEAR 11
YEAR 8	SIXTH FORM
YEAR 9	CAREERS
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WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

1. **Temporary Adjustment to Uniform Expectations Due to Hot Weather**

Due to the hot weather expected this week, we will be temporarily relaxing our uniform expectations to help ensure students remain comfortable during the school day.

For the rest of the week:

- Blazers will not be required
- Ties will not be required

This adjustment will be reviewed after Enrichment Week, once we have a clearer picture of the ongoing weather forecast.

Please note that all other uniform expectations remain in place, including appropriate school shoes and skirt lengths.

2. **Enrichment Week**

You should have already received an email confirming your child's place on the trips they have been assigned during enrichment week (bowling will come today). Emails with additional information will be sent out early this week.

If your child is not on a trip, they will be expected in as normal and will be advised of their internal activities closer to the time.

During Enrichment Week, students are permitted to wear non-uniform, except on specific days where they are required to wear PE kit (see below).

PE Kit Required:

- Year 7: Monday & Friday
- Year 8: Monday (X side only), Tuesday (Y side only), Wednesday (whole year)

- Year 9: Monday
- Year 10: Tuesday

While students are allowed to wear their own clothes, we kindly remind parents and students that outfits must be sensible and appropriate for school.

This includes:

- No very short shorts or skirts
- No revealing tops
- Usual rules regarding make-up, jewellery, and overall appearance still apply

Although warm weather is expected, students' clothing choices should reflect a respectful and school-appropriate standard.

3. Important Update on Parental Communication – Using the Admin Email

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve communication and support our staff, we have updated how parents and carers should get in touch with the school.

As you will have noticed, we have now removed all individual staff email addresses from our website. Instead, we ask that all contact from parents be directed through our central email address:
admin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

This inbox is secure and password-protected, accessible only by designated members of our Reception Team. Incoming messages are monitored throughout the school day and are promptly forwarded to the relevant member of staff.

Please continue to use this address even if you are contacting your child's form tutor, subject teacher, or Head of Year. The Reception Team ensure that messages are directed accurately and efficiently to the appropriate person.

We understand that some communications may include sensitive or confidential information. In these cases, we ask that you include the following phrase in your subject line or message:

Confidential Information Included – FAO [Staff Member's Name]

This helps us ensure the message is handled with extra care and passed on appropriately.

This change to communications enables us to:

- Monitor email volumes and communication patterns
- Ensure prompt and consistent responses
- Safeguard staff time and wellbeing
- Maintain a professional tone in all parent-school interactions

We aim to respond to parental communication in a timely and professional manner. The following guidelines apply:

- Non-urgent enquiries: You can expect a reply within two working days (48 hours).
- Urgent matters (e.g. safeguarding or student welfare concerns): These are prioritised, and we aim to respond on the same day or by the next working day.

- More complex issues (e.g. SEND queries, behavioural incidents): You will receive an acknowledgement within two working days, with a more detailed response typically provided within 5–10 working days, depending on the nature of the concern.

4. End of Term – Early Closure Notice

Please note that on the final day of term, **Friday 18 July**, the school will close early. Students will finish the day at **12:30pm**, at the end of Period 3.

We will share an update regarding school bus arrangements closer to the time.

5. Parent Trustee Vacancy

We currently have a vacancy for a Parent Trustee on the Birchwood High School Board. This is a valuable opportunity to contribute to the strategic leadership of the school and support our students and staff.

No specific qualifications are required, just a commitment to helping the school thrive. To learn more about the role and how to apply, [please read this letter](#).

The deadline for nominations is Monday 23rd June.

6. Car Parking Reminder – Afternoon Pick-Up

We kindly ask all parents and carers to be mindful of where they park when collecting students, particularly in the afternoons.

Please ensure that you are not blocking access routes or parking in a way that could obstruct emergency vehicles. It is essential that our car park remains safe, accessible, and clear at all times for the safety of all students, staff, and visitors.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

7. Sports Teams Photographs

If your child was part of one of our sports teams this year, their team photograph is now available to view.

A preview of the photograph can be accessed via the link on ParentPay before making a payment.

We're proud of all our student athletes and hope you enjoy these lasting memories of their sporting achievements this year.

8. Chemistry Week Competition

We're excited to launch our Chemistry Week Competition open to all KS3, KS4, and KS5 students!

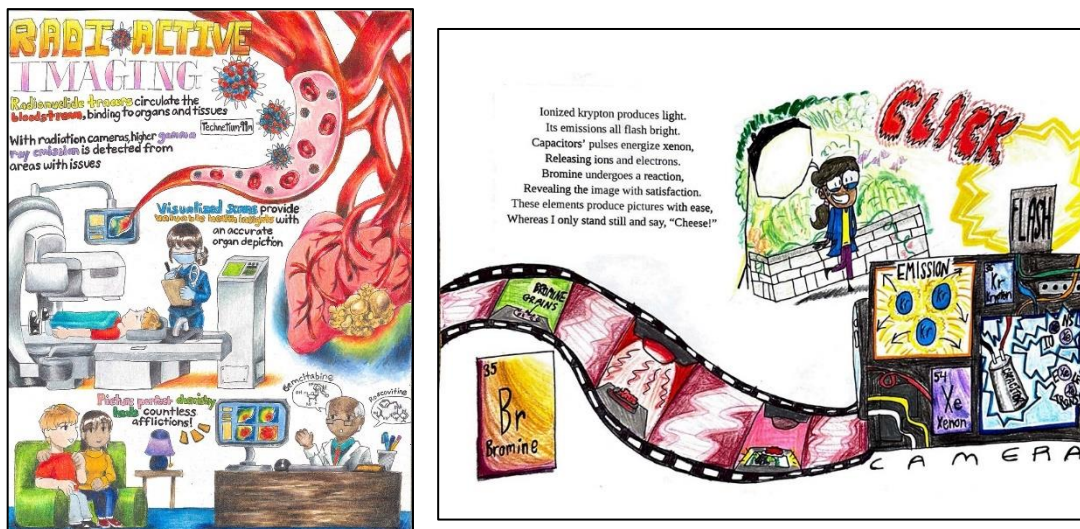
This year's theme is "Picture Perfect Chemistry", and we're inviting students to submit an illustrated poem that creatively explores the world of chemistry. Entries should be presented as an A4 or A3 poster, combining artwork and poetry to celebrate the subject.

The winning poster will be displayed in the school corridors during National Chemistry Week, beginning 20 October 2025, and the winner will also receive an Amazon voucher to spend on anything they like!

Deadline for entries: Thursday 3 July

Posters can be submitted to the Science Office any time before the deadline.

We look forward to seeing your creative ideas come to life! Here are some examples to spark inspiration:



9. Hertfordshire Music Service Bursary Update

[We have received the attached letter](#) from Hertfordshire Music Service in respect of the HMS Music Bursary Award Scheme.

Please be aware that Birchwood High School is unable to offer any funding in respect of school support for this bursary. Therefore, in the event of a bursary being offered by HMS, the remaining 50% will have to be self-funded by parents/carers.

Students currently receiving 25% school subsidy for orchestral instruments at Grade 2 and above and those taking GCSE (Y10 & Y11) and A level will continue to receive the 25% discount irrespective of their instrument.

10. Summer Music Concert – Thursday 19 June

We are delighted to invite you to our Summer Music Concert taking place on Thursday 19 June. This special evening will showcase the incredible talent of our students, with a variety of performances from across the school.

Tickets are available to purchase now via ParentPay.

In addition, a cream tea (scones with jam and cream) will be available to pre-order on ParentPay for those attending the event. We hope you can join us for an enjoyable evening of music and refreshments!

11. Supporting Links – Autumn 2025 Parent Courses

We're pleased to share that Supporting Links, who run parent support courses across Hertfordshire, have released their course schedule for Autumn 2025.

Courses on offer include:

- Talking to Teens
- Talking Anger in Teens
- Talking Additional Needs
- Talking Families
- Talking Anxiety in Teens
- Talking Dads

These courses offer practical advice and support for parents and carers on a range of topics. The course list and referral form can be found on our website, linked here:

<https://www.birchwoodhighschool.co.uk/page/?title=Letters%2C+News+and+Social+Media&pid=70&action=saved>

12. Norwich Football Club Girls Football Development Trials

Norwich City FC will be running Girls' Football Development Trials across the region this summer for players aged 7–16, of all abilities.

Led by UEFA-qualified coaches, the sessions focus on skill-building, confidence, and progression opportunities within the club's player pathway.

Dates: Various throughout Summer 2025

Locations: Multiple venues across the area

To register or find out more, visit: [Norwich City Girls Football Development Trials 2025/2026](#).

Successful players will receive a free training kit and opportunities to take part in fixtures, trips, and more.

13. Carers Week

This week is Carers Week. In Hertfordshire, we are celebrating the work and support that our young carers provide for their families. The Carers Trust estimates that as many as 1 in 5 school-aged children could be young carers. In Hertfordshire, the January 2025 School Census:

- Found that 60% of schools reported no known young carers
- Identified only 1,483 young carers out of approx. 200,000 pupils

These figures show many young carers remain hidden and unsupported. Carers in Hertfordshire will offer an assessment and further support. Please get in touch if your child needs support:

young.carers@carersinherts.org.uk

14. Charity Bike Ride:

This June, two of our staff members, Mr Gilbank and Mr Reilly, are swapping the classroom for the cycle path as they take on a charity bike ride in support of Maggie's, a cancer charity in Cambridge.

Maggie's provides free support to people living with cancer, as well as their families and friends. Their centres offer practical advice, emotional support, and a warm, welcoming environment for anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis. It's a cause close to many hearts, and we're incredibly proud to see members of our school community stepping up to support such important work.

Mr Gilbank and Mr Reilly are riding as part of the TLC Highway Challenge, helping to raise funds and awareness for Maggie's vital services.

If you'd like to show your support, you can visit their fundraising page and make a donation here:

<https://maggies.enthuse.com/pf/tlc-highway-f13d4>

YEAR 7

Enrichment Week Colour Run – Sign Up Still Open

As part of Enrichment Week, we're excited to be hosting a Colour Run on Friday 27 June for Year 7, 8, and 9 students who are not on a trip. The event will take place on the school field from lunchtime until 3:10pm and promises to be a fun and memorable afternoon! Runners will be covered in brightly coloured powder.

Sign-up is still open via ParentPay:

- £5 entry fee (covers participation and confirms permission)
- £10 minimum sponsorship, to be paid after entry (all funds go to our chosen school charity)

Please ensure your child is not on a trip that day before signing up. Thank you for your support! Here's a photo from last year to get your child excited to take part:



YEAR 8

Enrichment Week Colour Run – Sign Up Still Open

As part of Enrichment Week, we're excited to be hosting a Colour Run on Friday 27 June for Year 7, 8, and 9 students who are not on a trip. The event will take place on the school field from lunchtime until 3:10pm and promises to be a fun and memorable afternoon!

Sign-up is still open via ParentPay:

- £5 entry fee (covers participation and confirms permission)
- £10 minimum sponsorship, to be paid after entry (all funds go to our chosen school charity)

Please ensure your child is not on a trip that day before signing up. Thank you for your support!:

YEAR 9

Year 9 - D of E - Thursday 26 June

Emails confirming your child's attendance for the DofE training day have been sent today but we still have limited places available - please email trips@birchwoodhigh.org.uk to add your child's name to the list. If oversubscribed, names will be drawn at random.

In the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), participants engage in four main sections: Volunteering, Skills, Physical Recreation, and Expeditions. The DofE aims to help individuals develop personal skills and confidence through these activities. The DofE is designed to be challenging and rewarding, helping young people develop valuable skills and build their confidence. Participants set goals, track their progress, and seek feedback from assessors throughout the program.

At the taster day during enrichment week, you will complete some of the activities that you will need for the expedition - tent building, cooking with Trangias, walking with equipment, map navigating.

Enrichment Week Colour Run – Sign Up Still Open

As part of Enrichment Week, we're excited to be hosting a Colour Run on Friday 27 June for Year 7, 8, and 9 students who are not on a trip. The event will take place on the school field from lunchtime until 3:10pm and promises to be a fun and memorable afternoon!

Sign-up is still open via ParentPay:

- £5 entry fee (covers participation and confirms permission)
- £10 minimum sponsorship, to be paid after entry (all funds go to our chosen school charity)

Please ensure your child is not on a trip that day before signing up. Thank you for your support!

Ardèche Trip – Weather Forecast and Packing Reminder

Please be aware that the weather forecast for Ardèche is looking very warm during the trip.

We ask that parents ensure students pack hot weather essentials, including:

- Plenty of suncream
- A hat for sun protection
- A handheld fan if possible
- A reusable water bottle to stay hydrated

Staff will be closely monitoring students throughout the trip to ensure everyone remains safe and well in the heat. Thank you for your support in helping students prepare.

YEAR 10

Year 10 Mock Exams

In order to prepare students for their public GCSE exams next summer, we will be holding a series of formal assessments over the next half term, which will feed into the final report of the year. These assessments will mostly take place between the 16 June to 4 July.

The majority of subjects will be holding GCSE style assessments in lessons, but in order to ensure students become familiar with the processes of public examinations, we will be holding two full mock exams in the Sports Hall, one each for Maths and English. It will also be an opportunity for students who will receive exam access arrangements to experience the organisation of these processes.

Subject	Mock exam details	Exam length	Date	Start time:
English Language	Paper 1: Section A (Reading)	1hr	Monday 16th June	1pm*
Maths	Paper 1 (non-calculator)	1hr 30mins	Tuesday 17th June	9am

**Please note that for the English exam, students will receive an early lunch break during Period 4.*

Maths Mock Exam Revision

To support preparations for the Maths Mock Exam on 17th June, and students transition into Year 11, Maths revision will be held each fortnight for the rest of this term:

Monday, Week B at 3.15pm in the Maths corridor.

Early next term, you will have the opportunity to purchase a pack of past papers for students to be using at home. This is in addition to those we have already started working through in school. If you are purchasing any other revision materials for your child to use at home, please be advised that we are following the Edexcel 9-1 course. Set 1 and 2 are following the Higher course; sets 3, 4 and 5 are following the Foundation course.

Year 10 English Revision Sessions – Starting 11 June

We are pleased to offer after-school English revision sessions for Year 10 students as they begin preparing for next year's GCSE exams. These sessions will help build key skills in both Literature and Language, including essay writing, analysis, and interpretation.

Sessions run Wednesdays from 15:15 to 16:00, starting Wednesday 11 June, in D block classrooms. Students should attend their usual English teacher's room, or are welcome to join another group if their teacher is unavailable.

Revision Schedule – Wednesdays (15:15–16:00):

- Miss Braybrooke – D7
- Mr Smith – D4
- Mrs Osborne – D1
- Mrs Kee-Rose – C16
- Mrs Boittier – D6
- Mr Reilly – D2
- Miss Edwards – D3

Regular attendance is encouraged to support strong study habits and build confidence ahead of Year 11.

YEAR 11

Year 11 PE Kit Donations

As our Year 11 students prepare to move on, we would be very grateful for any donations of spare or no-longer-needed PE kit.

All items will be put to good use by the PE department for future students. If you have anything to donate, please hand it in to Miss Perrett.

Parent Pay Reminder:

As your child will shortly be starting their study leave and may not be returning to school, we would ask that you review your ParentPay account.

If you have any outstanding payments, please ensure these are settled in full before your child leaves the school.

If your account holds a credit balance, we kindly ask that you email jyoung@birchwoodhigh.org.uk to ensure you are refunded.

SIXTH FORM

Year 13 Parent Pay Reminder:

Year 12 Mock Exams:

[Please see the link to the Year 12 summer exam timetable.](#) The vast majority of these exams are internal, designed to assess students on their knowledge and skills from across the first half of their courses and to prepare them for public exams next summer.

The bulk of the exams are in week beginning 23rd June – as this is enrichment week for the main school, this will be a period of study leave and students should therefore only be on site for their exams. Lessons start again as normal on Monday 30th June, but students will obviously be excused if they have an exam.

A small number of subjects do not have internal assessments due to those students sitting public exam modules this summer.

Students will receive individual timetables later this week - they should check these carefully and notify the exams officer if they spot any errors. A small number of students may have exam clashes - arrangements for these will be communicated to those impacted.

The results of these assessments, alongside other evidence from smaller assessments across Year 12, will allow teachers to formulate a UCAS predicted grade which will be communicated home in the end of year report. Students who are likely to apply for university should therefore take these predicted grades into account when researching their potential courses over the summer.

Please also note the following:

- All exams will be held in the Old Gym with the exception of Media on Monday 23rd June which will be in the BDC
- Students receiving supporting access arrangements will be based in the BDC or A2 – please check individual timetables
- Students should be at the exam venue 15 minutes before the start time
- Students are expected to follow the 6th Form dress code as these exams will be treated as if they were public exams

Year 12 Environmental Science Trip – Thursday 19 June

A reminder to parents of Year 12 Environmental Science students that the trip to Crocodiles of the World takes place on Thursday 19 June.

Students must arrive at school between 7:30 and 7:45am in order to board the minibus and depart on time.

As the weather is expected to be warm, please ensure your child brings sunscreen, a water bottle, and a hat if needed.

Thank you for your support.

Mrs Pressland

