

Birches Head Academy

Parent Handbook

2023 - 2024



All are welcome... [Abbey Hulton Primary School](#) [Ball Green Primary School](#)
[Burnwood Community School](#) [Carmountside Primary Academy](#) [Crackley Bank](#)
[County Primary School](#) [Eaton Park Academy](#) [Etruscan Primary School](#) [Forest Park](#)
[Primary School](#) [Grove Academy](#) [Hanley St Luke's CE Aided Primary School](#) [Hillside](#)
[Primary School](#) [Kingsland C.E. Academy](#) [Maple Court Academy](#) [Milton Primary](#)
[Academy](#) [Moorpark Junior School](#) [New Ford Academy](#) [Norton-le-Moors Primary](#)
[Academy](#) [Our Lady And St Benedict Catholic Academy](#) [Priory CofE Primary School](#)
[Smallthorne Primary Academy](#) [Sneyd Academy](#) [St George And St Martin's Catholic](#)
[Academy](#) [St Josephs Catholic Academy, Goldenhill](#) [St Maria Goretti Catholic](#)
[Academy](#) [St Mark's CE Primary School](#) [St Marys Catholic Academy](#) [St Mary's](#)
[CofE Primary School](#) [St Peter's Catholic Academy](#) [St Thomas Aquinas Catholic](#)
[Primary School](#) [Stoke Minster CofE Primary Academy](#) [Summerbank Primary](#)
[Waterside Primary School](#) [Werrington Primary School](#) [Weston Junior Academy](#)

My Child's Form Tutor is:

WAYS TO GET IN TOUCH:

Academy Address:

Birches Head Academy
Birches Head Road,
Stoke on Trent
ST2 8DD

Social Media:

Facebook: BirchesHeadAcademy
Twitter: @BirchesHeadAcad

Telephone: 01782 233595
Email: info@bircheshead.org.uk
Website: www.bircheshead.org.uk

Principal: Katie Dixon
Chair of Governors: Roisin Maguire

For emergencies, please call
Main Reception on 01782 233595.





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WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I am extremely proud and privileged to introduce myself as Principal of Birches Head Academy or as we fondly call it BHA. Our core belief is that the Academy is a place where all children can and do learn. The vision is simple; to ensure that every one of our students leaves with the intellectual, cultural and social capital to lead a choice filled life. We do this by ensuring that all children have the best education and the best opportunities. We aim to instil into students a desire to be the best they possibly can be and, in doing so, will enable them to make a real difference to society.

As a school we benefit greatly from being part of the Frank Field Education Trust. The trust formed with the explicit intention of delivering world-class education through academic excellence, a rich curriculum and wider opportunities for all children. FFET was founded by the The Rt Hon. the Lord Field of Birkenhead CH DL, and its vision of 'Social Justice through Excellence in Education' ensures that no child is left behind, regardless of background.

My commitment to you is that my staff will work tirelessly to support your child with their education over the coming years and we look forward to welcoming you into the BHA community which is at the heart of Stoke-on-Trent.

Katie Dixon
Principal



FRANK FIELD EDUCATION TRUST



It is with great pleasure that I welcome you and your son or daughter to Birches Head Academy (BHA). It is a wonderful time to be joining our community and I know that you will be delighted at gaining a place here at the Birches Head Academy in Stoke-on-Trent.

Our aim is for all academies within OUR TRUST to be the best schools in the country.

Our success is very much based on the partnership we have with you our parents and carers. We know that if our school is full of children who always wanted a place at the school, who are proud to be here and buy into the values we promote and whose parents have confidence in what we can deliver, then we can truly flourish.

We look forward to the very exciting journey ahead. Children get one chance in terms of their education and it is our job to make sure they maximise their opportunity. You know that we also expect the highest standards of behaviour and we encourage students to be self-disciplined and well behaved at all times. High standards of uniform and appearance set the tone for all that we seek to achieve here and your continuing support in this area is crucial.

Students are proud to be here at BHA and understand that when they wear our uniform they are our ambassadors. High attendance is another vital ingredient if your child is to be successful. We cannot authorise term-time requests for leave and ask that parents do not book holidays when their child should be in school, tempting as it is with cheaper holiday packages.

Please take the time to read through this Parent Guide. It is where we attempt to make clear to parents what our expectations are, to give you an idea of some of the exciting opportunities that lie ahead and to outline how we can work in partnership together. We never take parental support for granted and it is a vital ingredient in our success and I know you will be extremely proud that your child is now part of the BHA family. Please don't hesitate to contact me if the need arises through this Academic Year.

Tom Quinn
CEO, Frank Field Education Trust (FFET)

MISSION STATEMENT

We seek to build a community where our students have the social, intellectual and cultural capital to have:

- Unlimited ideas and dreams
- A vision of what they want to achieve in life and how to achieve it
- A strong sense of duty and of service to others
- Care and compassion for each other
- Choice filled lives and be good people

Above all else, we want our students to develop the values and skills they need to live choice filled lives. This is articulated in our motto:

ASPIRE TO BE MORE

We want to be the best school in the city and one of the best in the country, so that all our students have the best education and students to model positive behaviours based on mutual respect and social integrity. Our community has a consistent culture of high expectations so that everyone can achieve their full potential. By doing this we will instil into our students a desire and the means to be the best and make a positive difference in our world.

Our Academy Values:

As staff and students of Birches Head Academy:

- We will teach and learn the values of courage, justice, honesty, compassion, gratitude, humility, integrity and respect.
- We will teach and learn the skills of leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication.

These values and skills will inspire us to grow in confidence and self-respect. They will foster a sense of pride and we will celebrate our successes.

YOUR CHILD'S TIMETABLE

All students in the Academy follow a timetable that runs over a two-week period. These timetables will be recorded in the student's Planner. The timetables will be given to students on their first day of the Autumn Term. It will highlight the subject, subject teacher and classroom. Students should arrive on site no earlier than 8.15am and should leave the site at 3:10pm unless they are attending an organised activity.

Year 7, 10 & 11

8:40am - 9:45am	Lesson 1
9:45am - 10:45am	Lesson 2
10:45am - 11:05am	Break Time
11:05am - 12:10pm	Lesson 3
12:10pm - 12:40pm	Lunch
12:40pm - 1:10pm	Academic Review
1:10pm - 2:10pm	Lesson 4
2:10pm - 3:10pm	Lesson 5

Year 8 & 9

8:40am - 9:45am	Lesson 1
9:45am - 10:45am	Lesson 2
10:45am - 11:05am	Break Time
11:05am - 12:10pm	Lesson 3
12:10pm - 12:40pm	Academic Review
12:40pm - 1:10pm	Lunch
1:10pm - 2:10pm	Lesson 4
2:10pm - 3:10pm	Lesson 5

TERM DATES

	Start	Finish		Start	Finish
Autumn Term	Tuesday 5 September 2023	Thursday 26 October 2023	Half Term Break	Monday 6 November 2023	Thursday 21 December 2023
Christmas Break					
Spring Term	Tuesday 9 January 2024	Friday 9 February 2024	Half Term Break	Monday 19 February 2024	Friday 22 March 2024
Easter Break					
Summer Term	Monday 8 April 2024	Friday 24 May 2024	Half Term Break	Monday 3 June 2024	Friday 19 July 2024

Bank Holidays:

25 December 2023
26 December 2023
1 January 2024
29 March 2024
1 April 2024
6 May 2024
27 May 2024

Christmas Day
Boxing Day
New Year's Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Early May bank holiday
Spring bank holiday

School Return

5 September 2023
6 September 2023

INSET Days:

4 September 2023
27 October 2023
22 December 2023
8 January 2024
22 July 2024

Year 7 Return Only
Whole School Return





INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

World-class Teaching & Learning which creates an excitement in, passion for and foundation of, academic knowledge and skills.

OUR CURRICULUM

Key Stage 3

The curriculum at Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9) has been carefully designed and sequenced. This is to ensure your child has a secure understanding of the core knowledge they will need to be successful by the end of year 9. Students in key stage 3 experience a broad and balanced range of subjects that meet National Curriculum requirements.

Key Stage 4

Having experienced a wide range of subjects in Key Stage 3, students are carefully supported in making their option choices in Year 9. The progress 8 measure means that in Key Stage 4, students will be expected to study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Geography and/or History, and in addition most students will study a Modern Foreign Language. Our students will make their option choices from a suite of other subjects on offer, such as PE, Drama and Music.

Homework

Homework is an important part of Academy life and all students are expected to complete it regularly. Homework is signposted in the Learning Programmes. Homework is recorded in the Student Planner. This should help you and your child to keep a check on what homework has been set and when it is due to be completed. If problems arise then we would ask you to contact your child's Subject Teacher or Head of Year. Planners are checked weekly by Form Tutors and yourselves to ensure your child is receiving and completing homework on a regular basis.

Reports

You will receive a report three times throughout the academic

year which will give you information about your child's progress in the subjects they are studying.

Literacy

We place an extremely high value on ensuring our students possess strong literacy skills needed for success. Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are crucial in ensuring outstanding learning within all curriculum areas but also in securing success in our students' lives beyond the Academy.

Opportunities for students to develop their skills in literacy are carefully planned across the curriculum. For this reason, we have formulated a whole Academy approach whereby all staff are committed to the teaching of reading as part of their lessons; the literacy texts are indicated on the Learning Programme.

Each classroom displays literacy support materials, such as key words, spelling rules and examples of punctuation. With literacy, our aim is to create an explicit focus in order to develop each student's ability to communicate clearly and accurately.

Attainment

Your child's progress is carefully assessed and monitored throughout their time at the Academy. We measure progress against our subject curriculums to ensure all students are gaining the knowledge and skills to be successful. If a student is identified as not achieving to their full potential, a range of interventions and support will be planned in order to get back on track.

OUR CURRICULUM

Literacy Intervention

For this reason, we have formulated a whole Academy approach whereby all staff are committed to the teaching of reading. Each subject will deliver three set texts every learning programme and through the English curriculum every student in Key Stage 3 will access a reading lesson once a fortnight.

Monitoring and supporting students' literacy skills

All students complete a diagnostic reading test that helps the Academy to identify the needs of all so that we can support each student as appropriate. Students will be tested again later in the academic year so that we can ensure that all students are making the expected progress.



WHAT ARE LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Teachers plan the students' learning over two key stages. These are bespoke learning journeys but follow the same cycle.

The Academy year is broken down into 5 units of work that we call learning programmes. All students follow a Learning Programme (LP) in all subjects. Each LP lasts for either 7 or 8 weeks and follow a rhythm of learning and review that ensures that students make rapid progress by responding appropriately to teachers' feedback.

The LPs are available in your child's exercise books and on the Academy website. LPs detail the programme of study for each subject, setting out the knowledge, skills and understanding your child is to be taught.

It is really important that you take an active interest in the learning that your child is experiencing. By following the LPs you can supplement the work being studied in the Academy through further enrichment activities or independent study.

WWW.BIRCHESHEAD.ORG.UK/LEARNING-PROGRAMMES

Birches Head Academy
Part of the Frank Field Education Trust

Year 11 RE Learning Programme 5
Indigo/Violet

The value we are learning about is **Compassion** - demonstrating care and concern for others.
What will I be learning about in this Learning Programme?
In this LP, we are applying prior learning about the beliefs and teachings of Islam to the topics of peace and conflict.

Where have I seen this learning before?
In year 7 LPS, we covered the basics of Islamic beliefs, teachings and practices, focussing on the Five Pillars;
In year 9, we covered the topics of peace and conflict in LP3;
What could I use it for?
We will return to this content when we revise for the GCSE examination during LPS;
This is one of the four topics on your GCSE RS paper 2 on Islam.

Classwork Task	PR Focus	Key Words	Homework
In LPS.1 Classwork I will: 09/05/22 - (WK 1) LIST causes of conflict; LIST effects of conflict; OUTLINE one Muslim opinion about the causes of conflict and peace-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peace	Complete one a-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.2 Classwork I will: 16/05/22 (WK 2) DESCRIBE Muslim views on conflict; DESCRIBE non-religious views on conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Causes	Complete one a-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.3 Classwork I will: 23/05/22 (WK 1) DEFINE pacifism; LIST reasons for and against pacifism; DESCRIBE Muslim views on pacifism; Extended Task	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pacifism	Complete one b-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.4 Classwork I will: 06/06/22 (WK 2) DEFINE Just War and Holy War; SUGGEST examples of wars which were Just/Holy; DESCRIBE Muslim views on war.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Just war	Complete one a-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.5 Classwork I will: 20/06/22 (WK 2) ASSESS any areas of particular strength/weakness in my learning; ADDRESS any areas of weakness from LP1-4; DEVELOP further understanding on key content from LP1-4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strength	Complete one a-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.6 Classwork I will: 27/06/22 (WK 1) DEFINE weapons of mass destruction; DESCRIBE Muslim views on weapons of mass destruction; Extended Task	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weapons	Complete one c-part question from your HWK booklet
In LPS.7 Classwork I will: 04/07/22 (WK 2) LIST a range of issues surrounding conflict; IDENTIFY the link between conflict and terrorism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflict	Learning Review Task

Resources to support learning:
Visit the Teams page for your group to access all of the resources and tasks from each lesson. For homework support, please see your RE teacher to organise a time to discuss. Homework tasks can be found at bircheshead.org.uk under the RE subject page.

BEING PREPARED FOR EACH DAY

Student Planner

Students are given a Student Planner at the beginning of the Autumn Term in which they are able to record information including homework, involvement in activities, half-termly progress grades, notes and achievements. The Planner is an important document which all students in Academy are expected to use and value.

It should be brought to Academy at all times and under no circumstances should there be any signs of graffiti. It is a vital means of recording homework and achievement and a means by which parents can communicate with your child's form tutor, teachers and vice versa.

Equipment

It is important that students arrive on time and well equipped for every lesson they attend. This prevents disruption to their learning as well as the learning of others. Please find below a list of basic equipment every student must have for every lesson. Equipment can also be purchased from 'Student Reception' during lunch and break times.

- Student Planner
- Pencil Case containing:
 - Minimum of 2 black and blue pens
 - Minimum of 2 pencils
 - Ruler
 - Rubber
 - Reading Book

The use of mobile phones is not permitted on the school grounds and they should be turned off and placed into the student's bag once on the school site. If a mobile phone is seen or heard it will be confiscated, parents will be contacted and asked to collect the mobile phone from main reception.

HOW TO USE THE STUDENT PLANNER

Homework Set

Students should record here when a teacher sets homework. They will be given time to do this in the lesson. They should record as follows: LP1:4. This refers to the Learning Programme they are following. In this case it was LP1 (Autumn Term) Week 4. The Learning Programmes are also available on our website.

Done

When the work is completed, students are reminded to tick the box. This helps their organisation and also helps parents and Form Tutors to monitor what homework is still outstanding. The Homework Record page will give a clear picture of what homework has been recorded. If you feel that your child is not getting homework in line with the Learning Programme please contact the Form Tutor in the first instance. This can be done via the planner.

Due in

Students will be given a clear deadline of when the work is expected in. They record the date the work is due in. E.g. 26/09/22

Parent and Teacher Comments

The right hand page provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to communicate via the planner. For example, parents may wish to provide a reason why a homework has not been completed or indicate difficulties with a particular homework. It may be that the Form Tutor has a concern over a Uniform and Appearance/Equipment issue and wishes to flag this up to parents. The space also provides the opportunity for parents to be reminded of any important events which are coming up.

Parent and Form Tutor Signatures

Tutors and parents make sure that the Planner is signed for the appropriate week. Each Monday, Form Tutors will be signing the Planner in Registration and it is expected that every student will have a parental signature to say they have checked the Planner.



TECHNOLOGY AT THE ACADEMY

To use the Academy's computer network all students and parents/ carers must agree and sign our ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.

Username and Password

On joining the Academy, students are issued with a username and password for access to the network. Students can change their password at any time.

Social Networking Guidance

The widespread availability and use of mobile technology and social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in a variety of ways. Whilst we embrace these technologies our Academy mobile phone and e-safety policies do not permit students to access these sites during the school day. We do not allow the use of a mobile phone during the day. They should be switched off on entry to the school site in the morning.

Social networking sites have a 'no under 13 registration policy' and recommend Parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds. Use of mobile technologies and social media sites does, on occasion, lead to incidents of 'cyber bullying'. Whilst we have zero tolerance to bullying, by adopting the recommended no use of mobile phones/ social networking sites on the Academy premises, bullying issues linked to use of this media outside of the school day will not be dealt with unless it is directly impacting on students' relationships in school.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to monitor their child's



mobile phone/social networking site usage.

Email

The Academy is keen to ensure that we communicate with parents as quickly and effectively as possible. We hope that you are able to provide an up to date email address for us, which will facilitate this form of communication. It will allow us to send important reminders and email alerts, as well as instant news. Regular updates are also posted to our website and social media pages.

STAYING SAFE ONLINE

You can make a huge difference if you talk to your child about their internet use; let them know you are there to guide them and to pass on essential safety advice.

For the great majority of children, their use of the internet will be perfectly safe and enjoyable. But nothing in life is 100% safe, all of the time, and the internet is no different. Just like in the real world, we need to take sensible precautions on the internet to protect our families from harm.

1. Talk to your child about their internet use and take an interest. Your involvement is the best way of keeping them safe.
2. Pass on the safety advice in this handbook – talk over the advice given.
3. Be positive! The internet is a fantastic resource for learning, entertainment and communication. Just like in the real world, you need to take a few sensible precautions.
4. Let your child know they can come to you if something they don't like happens online. Try not to overreact. This could simply make your child secretive about their internet use and close down lines of communication between you.
5. Remember that all the safety advice here also applies to going online with a mobile phone.
6. If you decide to use software to filter or monitor information from the internet, talk this over with your child. Any ground rules you agree will be much more effective.

Action checklist for all our students staying safe online

- ✓ Remember, everyone you meet online is a stranger, even though they might seem like a friend
- ✓ Always use a nickname when you log on and never give out any personal details that would allow someone you meet online to contact you. This means full name, home or school address, telephone number, personal email or mobile number
- ✓ Never arrange to meet up alone with someone you make friends with online. If you believe they are a potential friend, speak with an adult. Always take an adult you trust and meet in a public place
- ✓ Try to have your online conversations in public; people are less likely to hassle you if other people can see them doing it
- ✓ Accepting emails or opening files from people you don't really know can get you into trouble – they may contain viruses, nasty messages or annoying links you don't want to see
- ✓ Talk to an adult you know well and ask for help if you are worried or upset about anything you have seen or been sent online
- ✓ When posting photographs online, ensure you do not show the school badge or take pictures outside the school premises - this makes it easier to identify the area you live in. Linking your photos with information from your social media profile, the updates you post or your 'check-ins' can reveal a lot about you that you may not want out there.

A young man in a school uniform is shown in profile, reading a book. He is wearing a dark blazer with light-colored piping, a white shirt, and a blue tie. The background is a library with bookshelves filled with books. A decorative teal and yellow shape is on the left side of the page.

ACADEMY LIBRARY

Our vibrant Library is located in the heart of the Academy and is valued by the whole Academy from Year 7 right through to Year 11. The library was refurbished in 2020 to provide an exciting new learning environment.

Key Aims and Objectives of Academy Library

To develop a reading for pleasure culture within Birches Head Academy

- To create a stimulating and vibrant venue which acts as the hub for reading within Birches Head Academy
- To be inclusive and to meet the reading needs of all the members of Birches Head Academy community
- To support achievement and to develop students' self confidence in themselves as learners through improved literacy levels
- To provide enrichment opportunities, both cultural and spiritual, through reading for pleasure and associated activities



SOCIAL CAPITAL

A network of supportive adults who help students to develop strong values and behaviours with a rich curriculum of music, sport, and arts education to enable an emotionally healthy life.

UNIFORM & APPEARANCE

Birches Head Academy uniform has been selected to ensure all students feel part of the Academy's community. Items of clothing have been chosen carefully to ensure they are not unduly expensive but smart. Personal presentation is important in the world of work and want to ensure that all our students develop a sense of pride in their appearance.

Essential Uniform Items

Blazer	Birches Head Academy Blazer with embroidered badge
Jumper	Birches Head Jumper only
Tie	Birches Head Academy Tie
Shirt	Plain white with formal collar
Trousers	Mid grey formal school trousers (from any school wear provider)
Skirt	Birches Head Academy grey/black tartan skirt
Tights	Black 80-100 denier
Coat	Plain and waterproof, no jackets, hoodies, denim
Bag	Birches Head Academy Bag (rucksack)
Shoes	Black school shoes (not canvas, sports branded or trainers)
Religious Clothing	Hijabs and Jilbabs must be mid grey



All items of academy uniform can be purchased from either:

The National Schoolwear Centres Hanley

97 – 101 Stafford Street
Hanley ST1 1LS
Telephone: 01782 272991

Motif Marketing

11 Millrise Road, Milton,
Stoke on Trent ST2 7BN
Telephone: 01782 534849

School trousers/skirts must be formal school wear , see overleaf for full guidance.

UNIFORM & APPEARANCE



Tailored mid grey trousers for both boys and girls. These should look like suit trousers and should be made from cotton like material.



Trousers must be smart and business like. Stretchy, tight fitting trousers are not acceptable.



Tailored mid grey skirt, knee length worn with black opaque tights. Skirts must be the correct length which is on the knee or slightly below, allowing 2 centimetres growth.



Academy branded Bag



For guidance, please consult the school shoe catalogue produced in conjunction with Wynsors World of Shoes or contact your child's form tutor.

Jewellery

Only a watch is permitted. We advise all students not to have piercings until the start of the 6 weeks holidays to ensure all studs can be safely removed prior to the start of school. Any item of jewellery seen will be confiscated, including facial piercings of any kind (e.g. lip/nose/eyelid). Clear retainers are not allowed.

The Academy does not accept any responsibility for the loss of or damage to personal possessions brought on site.

Equipment

All students must have a pencil case including: pencils, pens, ruler, rubber, their planner and a reading book with them daily.

Mobile Phones are forbidden within the school grounds. Mobile phones will be confiscated if students have a mobile phone out in class, during social times or in any areas of the school premises. Mobile phones should be turned off and placed into the student's bag once on the school site.

Hair and cosmetics

Hairstyles should be sensible. No inappropriate styles will be allowed, with the following all being deemed to be inappropriate: 'pattern cuts, shaved heads (less than a number two) excessively coloured hair (natural colour only), different coloured extensions (either braid or dyed).

Cosmetics

False nails, false eyelashes or other such beauty accessories are not acceptable.

In the interest of health and safety, students will not be permitted to wear pump style footwear. Converse, Vans, Nike AirMax and high tops etc are not acceptable and MUST not be worn

School trousers/skirts must be formal school wear.

UNIFORM & APPEARANCE

Essential PE Kit

T-Shirt	Birches Head Academy Polo shirt with emblem
Jogging Bottoms	Navy blue jogging bottom with no branding / logos
Leggings	Navy blue leggings with no branding / logos
Hoodie (optional)	Birches Head Academy Navy blue hoodie with emblem - only to be worn during PE lessons
Socks (optional)	Academy socks are optional. Must be worn when representing the school
Footwear	Trainers - no canvas pump style



**Trainers will need to be worn for all PE lessons.
No shoes are allowed.**

When representing the Academy in any sports occasion, full Academy kit must be worn including the Academy socks.

Non participants

Note from parent/guardian
Long term non participation – medical note

Remember

- Long hair tied back

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

Pastoral Care

The Principal is assisted in the planning and delivery of pastoral care at the Academy by a team which includes Senior Leaders, Heads of Year, Subject Leaders, Learning Coaches and Form Tutors.

Form tutors are the first point of contact at the Academy and will deal with the majority of questions or concerns that may arise. For more serious issues, the Head of Year or Learning Coach is there to support you and your child both in terms of their academic progress and for any major pastoral issues that may arise. Please get in touch with your child's Form Tutor, Head of Year or Learning Coach either by phone, email or letter. The pastoral staff should be kept informed about illness, absence, dental or medical appointments or any change in home circumstances.

Academic Review

Your child will spend 25 minutes each day with their form during a period of time called 'Academic Review'. During this time, students will meet with their Form Tutor. A daily uniform and appearance check is carried out to ensure the highest of standards are maintained. Your child will have at least one assembly each week. As part of our drive to encourage all children to enjoy the pleasure of reading, we actively promote this by asking all students to read. We ensure that students in Years 7-9 have reading books appropriate to their reading age. Your child's Form Tutor will focus on the tracking and monitoring of students' academic progress through individual meetings, supporting the work of the Head of Year.

Home Contact Details

It is essential that we are able to contact Parents/Carers at the earliest opportunity. Please ensure that all contact details are correct including emergency phone numbers and email addresses. Students are, in effect, a health and safety risk if we are unable to

contact parents/ carers should an emergency arise. Please supply at least two contact details we can use to support this.

Medical Guidance

The Academy has full-time First-Aiders available for students. Should your child require first-aid treatment or medical assistance you will be informed at the earliest opportunity if first aid is necessary.

Due to changes in medical guidance from September 2014, written consent now has to be obtained from Parents/ Carers before any medicine (including paracetamol) can be administered.

Supporting Students with Additional Needs

At the Academy we recognise that provision for students with additional needs and disabilities is a whole school responsibility. Our SEND policy and provision is guided by the SEND Code of Practice, 2014.

Our SEND policy aims:

- to ensure barriers to learning are identified and addressed
- to offer a graduated and thoughtful response to identifying, assessing and meeting needs
- to facilitate access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all students
- to enable students with additional needs to achieve academically, commensurate with ability and to be set aspirational targets
- to take into account the views of students with additional needs
- to encourage meaningful and regular communication with parents and carers of students with additional needs
- to offer appropriate support and modification, according to advice and need

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential. Students need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Birches Head Academy fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure students are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. Registers are completed electronically every lesson throughout the day.

Absence

All absences should, of course, be kept to an absolute minimum. If your child is ill and unable to attend the Academy, please contact us by telephone as soon as possible. It is expected that when students return, they provide a note from parents. Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Principal and Governors at our school are committed to working closely with parents, other professionals and agencies to ensure that all students are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Regular attendance and good punctuality at school is expected. The reasons for this are obvious: students learn best and receive most from Academy when they are actually there. This issue is highlighted in the Home/School Agreement which all parents are asked to sign at the beginning of each year and also within other regular communications between home and school.

Support

Any student whose absence falls below 97% will be noted by the Head of Year and the student will be placed on the 'Attendance Strategy' which is a graduated intervention system. This is to encourage improved attendance and where needed to put support systems in place with additional agencies, to address persistent

absence issues.

Holidays during term time

The Principal may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. The Principal will also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. From this perspective leave of absence in term time is no longer a parental right and will only be authorised at the Principal's discretion. Under DFE guidelines the school will notify the Local Authority if a parent/s takes leave of absence without the Principal's permission. In these cases, the U code will be used on the register to show this absence is unauthorised.

Lateness

Students who arrive late to school will receive a late mark which will result in them receiving a same day after school detention for 20 minutes.

Medical Visits

Children who have to leave for any reason throughout the day should sign out at Student Reception and make their way to the main office for collection by their parent/carer or appropriate adult. This is strongly discouraged. Parents are requested to make dental or medical appointments outside of school hours. Occasionally, students will need to leave the Academy during the day for an urgent visit to the doctor, hospital or dentist. They must bring a note from you, or a note should be added to their student planner, to show to their Form Tutor.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY



The chart below shows the number of days and lessons of 'lost learning' for students who fall below certain percentage attendances. The chart is based on a school with a 190 day year and shows a five period day.



You can help by:

- making sure that your child's attendance and punctuality are as good as possible
- not condoning your child's absence for minor things
- making sure appointments for the dentist etc are made outside of school hours

Is 95% attendance good? This means that your child has still missed nearly 10 school days in one year. Over five years that would be nearly 50 days, this is almost a school term. Research suggests that '17 missed school days a year equals a drop in a grade in GCSE achievement' (Department for Education).

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

At Birches Head Academy we know how important it is to build partnerships with parents. This builds strength in our community and supports students in their development and learning. We rely on the commitment and support of all parents to make this partnership work. We often run events to support this partnership and are always open to new ideas and feedback so please contact us whenever you feel the need to. This is a summary of the Home-Academy agreement that Form Tutors, Parents and Students are asked to sign up to in the Student Planner.

It is the responsibility of the Academy

- To provide a safe and secure environment in which students can develop academic, sporting and cultural talents
- To develop in the Academy a true sense of community
- To establish effective partnership and communication with parents
- To provide high quality teaching, learning and support

It is the responsibility of parents

- To ensure your child attends Academy regularly in full uniform and is properly equipped and on time for the school day
- To support the authority and discipline of the Academy
- To take an active interest in your child's academic progress by supporting the Academy's homework programme and by attending Parent Evenings and other relevant activities where possible
- To ensure that you are fully aware of the Academy policies by reading all listed on the website

It is my responsibility as a student

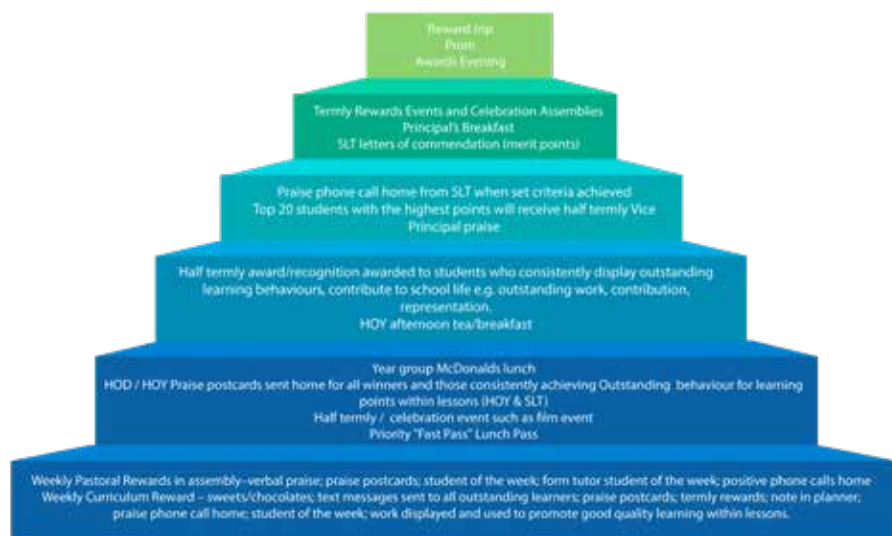
- To attend in full uniform and arrive promptly and properly equipped for each day
- To be an ambassador for the Academy whilst travelling to and from home
- To accept the authority of the Academy at all times
- To do my best at all times

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Praise and Rewards

It is very important to recognise hard work, effort, success and achievement and celebrate this through our Academy community. Our rewards system is linked to our positive and negative behaviour points system 'Class Charts'. This ensures all students have the opportunity to have their efforts and achievements recognised and rewarded. There is an expectation that Class Charts positive points will be awarded by all staff for various reasons, including (but not limited to) recognition of good effort within the classroom, 100% attendance, positive contribution in form time, excellent homework etc. Class Charts totals will be highlighted weekly in assemblies and prizes and rewards available include 'fast pass lunch pass', termly reward trips, school vouchers etc.

Rewards Pyramid:



Behaviour and Discipline

To ensure the Academy is a safe community where all can learn, we have a minimum number of rules. Our Behaviour for Learning policy ensures the smooth running of the Academy and fosters good working relationships between staff and students. The Class Charts system is used to allow positive and negative comments to be logged, it is also important to recognise all incidents of positive and negative behaviour. Class Charts information is shared with parents and is accessed in real time through a web browser or app.



All behaviours in and out of the classroom will be logged using Class Charts via the levels that link to our Behaviour policy. Students will be taught that behaviour is a choice which can bring positive and negative consequences; good behaviour is expected and rewarded, negative behaviour is sanctioned.

Any students breaking the rules regarding punctuality, uniform, behaviour or use of the facilities should be dealt with either by a class/Form Tutor in the first instance (Level 1 behaviour). For more serious matters (Level 2 behaviour) students will be referred to the Subject Leader or Head of Year. There may be occasions where behaviour is serious enough to necessitate the referral to a Senior Leader (Level 3 behaviour).

Please refer to the Academies Behaviour for Learning policy for full detail of the policy and practice.



THE DINING EXPERIENCE

The Catering Staff work very hard to maintain the quality and variety of meals with every effort being made to respond to students' requests.

The Academy has been at the forefront of the 'Healthy Schools' agenda and has been awarded 'Healthy School' status.

Packed Lunches

If you wish your child to bring a packed lunch then this should be eaten in the dining hall or in the designated area.

We do not allow fizzy drinks, high energy drinks and high caffeine drinks onto the premises. Water is always the healthy option. Please try to give your child a healthy variety each day and encourage them to eat fruit rather than sweets.

ParentPay

ParentPay allows you to make payments online for items such as dinner money and school trips. Using a secure website called ParentPay you will be able to pay online using your credit / debit card or make cash payments at PayPoint stores. ParentPay will be our preferred method of making payments to school.

- Visit www.parentpay.com
- Enter your activation username and password in the Account Login section of the homepage (please contact the Academy if you have not received your activation username and password).
- Once activation is complete you can go straight to Items for payment, select which item(s) you want to add to your basket and proceed to complete your payment

Cashless Dining Hall System

The dining hall operates a cashless system whereby meals are paid for with credits using a biometric fingerprint system. Money can be credited to accounts using the revaluation machines in the dining hall or by ParentPay



Safeguarding Teams

Child Protection Concerns - If you have any concerns that a student is in need because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm, please act immediately by asking to speak to one of the following.



**Designated
Safeguarding Officer**

Sarah Williams



**Deputy
Safeguarding Officer**

Debra Chawner



**Deputy Safeguarding
Officer: SEND**

Lynn Brammer

The following staff are all **Level 2 Safeguarding** qualified and can be contacted in an emergency:

- Maxine Adams-Morris – Attendance Officer
- Patsy Ball - Pastoral & Behaviour Support Practitioner
- Sherelle Stevenson - Inclusion Support Officer & Attendance Administrative Assistant

REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN



What is Safeguarding?

The following information can also be found, along with greater detail, in the schools Safeguarding policy.

In order to ensure students are safe whilst at school, we have a clear safeguarding policy in place. Safeguarding can encompass other areas of a student's life (in/outside school) and we will always seek to support the student and families in these areas where we can and where it is appropriate to do so. At Birches Head Academy we believe that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and we believe that we have a duty of care in this area which goes above and beyond the statutory requirement. We recognise that we may be the 'significant adult' in the students' lives at school, and therefore their safety is paramount.

Every child and young person has a right to be safe. Safeguarding means keeping our students safe from any type of harm or neglect. All adults have a responsibility to protect children and it is the role of parents, carers and adults such as teachers, learning mentors, doctors, nurses, social workers, police officers, faith leaders and sports coaches to ensure that our students are safe.

How do I Report a Safeguarding Concern?

If you are worried about something that is happening to your child or someone you know, you don't have to deal with it on your own – Talk to the Designated Safeguarding Officer: Mrs S Williams or the Deputy Safeguarding Officers: Mrs D Chawner or Mrs L Brammer. You can do this using the Safeguarding "Tell Us" menu (www.bircheshead.org.uk/tell-us/) on our website to submit a confidential concern, or by calling the school office on 01782 233595 and your details will be passed on to one of the safeguarding team to return your call.

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a dark blue school blazer over a white shirt and a blue tie, is looking thoughtfully to his right. He is in a classroom setting with computer monitors and a bulletin board in the background. The image has a decorative green and blue geometric overlay at the top.

CULTURAL CAPITAL

A wide variety of residential, outdoor and other experiences which prepare students for later life and help them find the things that they love so that they develop into well-rounded, confident and aspirational global citizens.



Extra-curricular Timetable - Summer Term 1 - 2022/23

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
After School	Years 7 Football Sports Hall 2.45pm to 3.45pm (SD)	All Years Homework Club CS1 2.40pm to 3.30pm (KBO)	All Years MFL Cooking Club MFL4/Food Room 2.45pm to 3.30pm (RF)	Year 8 & 9 Football Club Sports Field 2.45pm to 3.45pm (NW)	Year 10 & 11 Football Football Courts 2.45pm to 3.45pm (RU)
	All Years History Club HU6 2.40pm to 3.30pm (JTG)		All Years ECO Club SC3 (& School Grounds) 2.45pm to 3.45pm (CM)	All Years Chess Club Library 2.40pm to 3.40pm (TB)	Year 11 P6 Music MU2 2.45pm to 3.30pm (EM)
	All Years Grow It Club SC3 2.45pm to 3.45pm (CM)		All Years Choir Club MU2 2.40pm to 3.30pm (EM)	All Years Rock & Pop Band MU1 2.40pm to 3.40pm (EM)	All Years Boxing Dance Hall 2.45pm to 3.45pm (External Staffing)
	Year 9/10 DoRE Award HU2 2.40pm to 3.40pm (KBU)		KS3 Only Homework Club SEN 2.40pm to 3.30pm (LB)	All Years Young Engineer of the Year 2021-22 - Sent into Space SC3 2.45pm to 3.45pm	All Years Dodgeball Sports Hall 2.45pm to 3.45pm (SD)
	All Years Maths Homework Club CS2 2.45pm to 3.45pm (JP)		All Years Basketball Club Sports Hall 2.45pm - 3.45pm (External Staffing)	All Years Badminton Club Sports Hall 2.45pm to 3.45pm Sports Hall (SD)	
	Years 7 and 8 Hot Chocolate Club Library 2.40pm to 3.30pm (CWN)		All Years Dance Club Dance Hall 2.45pm - 3.45pm (SD)	Years 9, 10 & 11 Rugby Club Sports Field 2.45pm to 3.45pm (KJ, RBV, DC)	
			All Years LEGO Robotics Club SC3 2.45pm to 3.45pm (CM/JP)	All Years Week 1 ONLY Sign Language Club SEN3 2.40pm to 3.30pm (KF/LT)	
			All Years Girls Football Club PE Dept 2.45pm to 3.45pm (TA (SEN))	Year 10 Art Club AR1 2.45pm to 3.40pm (KBE)	
			All Years Cricket Club PE Dept 2.45pm to 3.45pm (SD)	All Years Rounders Club Basketball Court 2.45pm - 3.45pm (SE)	
			All Years Drama Club Drama Studio 2.45pm to 3.40pm (JC)	All Years Pokemon Club ENG 2.45pm - 3.30pm (JRS)	
			WEEK 1 ONLY All Years Sign Language Club SEN 2.45pm - 3.30pm (KF)		

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

We strive to provide students with a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities which take place at the end of each day. A timetable is shared with students and parents at the beginning of each learning cycle.

It is an expectation that all students in Years 7-10 join at least one club per learning programme and they are awarded positive achievement points and LORIC points for their attendance at their chosen clubs. Year 11 students are committed to their daily additional study period.

www.bircheshead.org.uk/extra-curricular



ASPIRE TO BE MORE



Raising aspirations is extremely important to us and we aim to develop the understanding that learning (and the experiences that take place within and around this learning) can be the route to enhanced opportunities.

The mission of our Academy is such that all are encouraged to develop their talents as fully as possible and to use those gifts for others in the spirit of 'What more can I do, what more can I give?'

At the end of five years at our Academy it is hoped that young people are:

- happy, friendly, and self-confident, with a sense of humour and an awareness of their gifts and talents and the need to fulfil their potential for good
- seen to have a generosity of spirit and a readiness to place their talents at the disposal of others
- well prepared to take their place in wider society, unmotivated

by prestige or selfish ambition and aware of how fully they can contribute to the common good

- ready to ask 'What more can I do, what more can I give?' in every area of life
- proud of having belonged to our communities demonstrating respect for our common values and for those who taught them.
- respectful of others, treating them with dignity.

We also take very seriously our role as educators to ensure that students leave our Academy with a strong sense of their own mission and calling.

When they are ready for the outside world, we want our students to leave with a desire to become the next generation of leaders.

We know that you will do everything to encourage them as we journey together.

FRANK FIELD EDUCATION TRUST (FFET) AWARDS INFORMATION

The FFET award involves students being set challenges by their teachers. The award will be based on the values and skills of our academy.

The values we want our students to hold are:

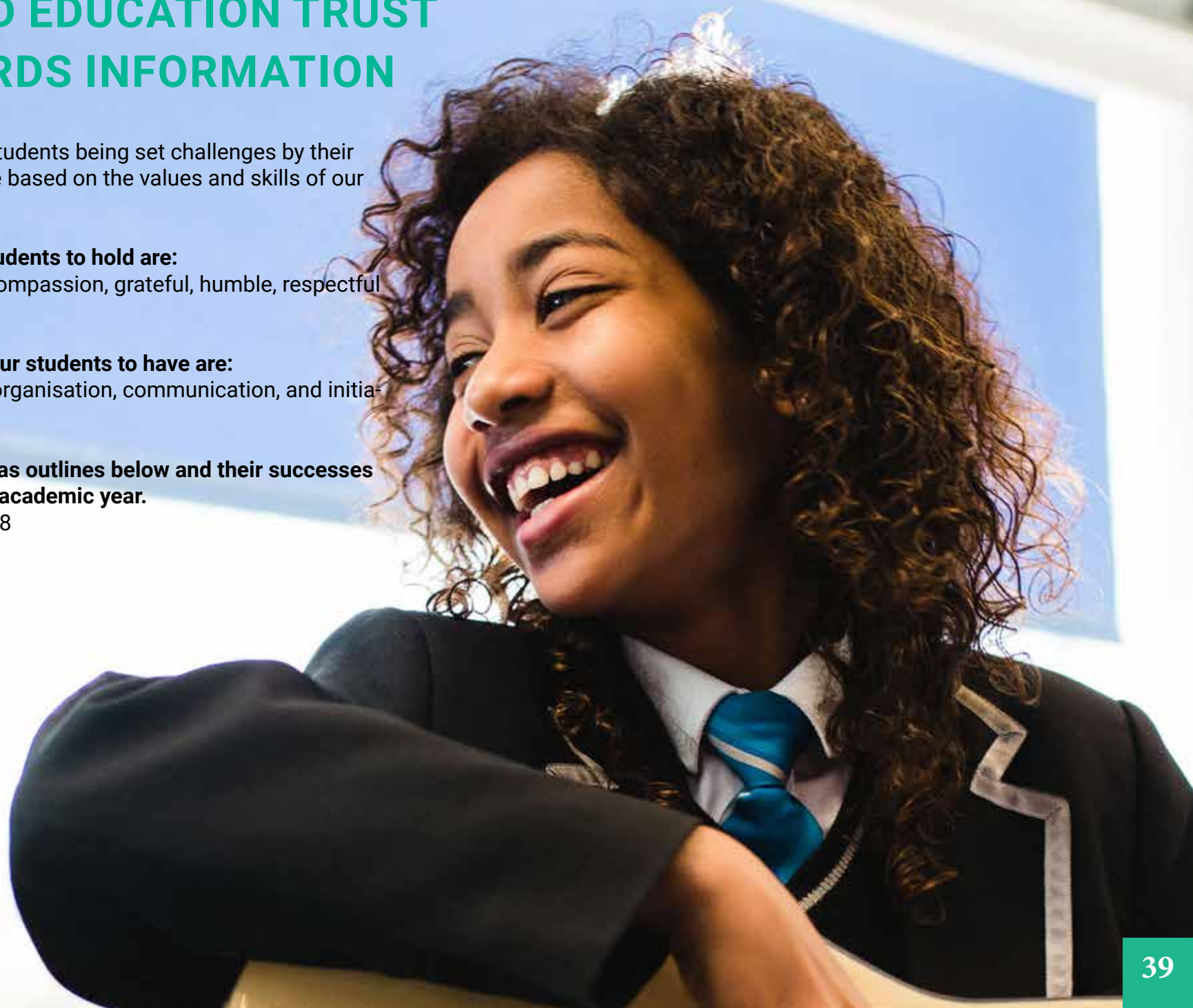
- Courage, just, honest, compassion, grateful, humble, respectful and integrity

The skills which we want our students to have are:

- Leadership, resilience, organisation, communication, and initiative

Students will be rewarded as outlines below and their successes celebrated throughout the academic year.

- Foundation: Year 7 and 8
- Intermediate: Year 9
- Master: Year 10



THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

All pupils in Year 9 are offered the chance to start the Bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. It is a chance to discover new interests and talents. It can also be a tool to develop essential skills for life and work and is a recognised mark of achievement; respected by employers.

At Bronze level pupils will complete a volunteering activity to help the environment or their local community. They will complete a physical activity each week to help develop their fitness. Finally they will select a new skill to work on before planning for and completing an expedition.

There is chance then to progress onto the Silver Award before moving onto one of the local colleges who all offer the much coveted Gold Award.

More information can be found at www.dofe.org



THE PERFORMING ARTS SCHOOL

Launched in September 2021, The Performing Arts School at Birches Head Academy provides students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) with the opportunity to sign up for one extra Performing Arts lesson every week in order to:

- Develop their performance skills in Dance
- Develop their performance skills in Drama / Acting
- Learn a musical instrument with specialist visiting teachers from the City Music Service

Performing Arts School students can also participate in:

- Workshops and masterclasses with industry professionals
- Educational visits to watch professional shows and productions
- Performances outside of the school at external events

It is expected that all Performing Arts School students will take part in a range of performance events in school as follows:

- Assemblies
- Showcase performances for students
- Showcase performances for parents, carers and the wider school community

Students will be given more information in the 2023 Year 7 launch assembly, and in their Performing Arts lessons over the first 2 weeks of term. Sign-up is via letter and reply slip.

If you would like more information, please contact Head of Department via e-mail (info@bircheshead.org.uk) or telephone on the usual school number (01782 233595).



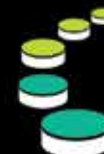


Birches Head Academy

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Website: www.bircheshead.org.uk



Part of the

Frank Field

Education Trust