

Dear Parent/Carer,

Mental Health Week

As we come to the end of Children's Mental Health Week, it's a great opportunity to take stock of our children's well-being. Mental health should be treated with the same level of importance as physical health. We all possess it, and it is our responsibility to care for it. This involves being able to identify when something isn't quite right, as well as implementing preventative measures to ensure our children's mental health is in good condition.

If you are worried about your child's mental health, especially as we approach February half term, please take the time to visit Young Minds, a charity committed to the mental health of young people. Their website offers assistance and resources to young individuals and parents. It contains valuable guidance and advice including a helpline for parents and children in need of support.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Mock Examinations arrangements for Y11

The assessments will be completed over a three-week period, commencing on Monday 19TH February 2024 and finishing on Friday 8th March 2024. Please see the image below for mock exams on the first week back.

If a pupil is absent during one or more of their exams, they will be given an opportunity to sit the exam once they return to school.

DATE	START	LENGTH	EXAM
Monday 19th February	08:45	2:30	English Literature
Monday 19th February	13:10	1:30	Maths Paper 1
Tuesday 20th February	08:45	1:30	Maths Paper 2
Tuesday 20th February	13:10	1:45	Business
Wednesday 21st February	08:45	2:00	History Paper 1
Wednesday 21st February	13:10	1:30	Geography (Paper 3)
Thursday 22nd February	08:45	2:00	3D Design
Thursday 22nd February	13:10	1:30	Computer Science
Friday 23rd February	08:45	1:30	Sport
Friday 23rd February	11:10	0:45	Physics
Friday 23rd February	13:10	1:45	Religious Education

China – Chengdu Visit

The final six pupils were selected this week to take part in our upcoming trip to Chengdu in China. Please join me in offering heartfelt congratulations. The competition was demanding of pupils commitment and time. I would like to thank all pupils who applied. Even if not successful on this occasion, all should be proud to have been involved in this opportunity. I hope that no pupil is disheartened and that they continue to be courageous and try for every opportunity we can offer.

I look forward to updating you all on the adventures of our successful six.

Uniform Reminder

Over the past few weeks uniform and equipment issues have been rising across the Academy. I politely request that during the half term break you ensure that your child returns to Birches Head Academy with the following:

- Blazer
- BHA tie
- Academy jumper
- grey trousers or Academy skirt (not black)
- polishable footwear (no trainers)
- BHA Academy bag.
- Planner (can be purchased for £2.50)
- a pencil case (inc pen, pencil and a ruler)
- Full PE kit

If this is not possible, or there are any issues please contact your child's Head of Learning. See the attached uniform guide for information on our uniform expectations.

Y10 Work Experience - Tuesday 16th- Thursday 18th July 2024

As part of the work-related learning curriculum at Birches Head Academy, we are offering pupils in Year 10 the opportunity to participate in a work experience placement. It is a great opportunity for all pupils to spend some time with an employer or other organisation, allowing them to experience as far as possible the hours, working conditions and regulations they may encounter when they go to work themselves.

Whilst we are encouraging pupils to arrange their own placement to ensure it is an area they are genuinely keen on, can I ask that parents/carers continue vital conversations with their children about placements to ensure they are motivated to complete them successfully. Employers also much prefer it when pupils contact them themselves as it shows initiative and interest.

Household Support Fund

You may or may not be aware that in the Autumn Statement there was no new funding announced for a further round of the Household Support Fund. Many organisations are calling for further funding to be agreed but as yet nothing has been forthcoming.

As such, the Christmas food vouchers were the last round of food vouchers available to families for use over the school holidays and you will no longer receive any future vouchers.

Although as it stands there will be no further Household Support Fund, there is still support available for families around the city and we will keep our website updated with any information if anyone contacts you needing further help.

Should there be any new funding announcement we will of course keep you all updated.

Keele University Pharmaceutical Visit

We had 10 final year Keele University pharmacy students and one lecturer Amber Heard visiting the school on Thursday to deliver a workshop on vaping. The focus of the visit was advising pupils around the health risks involved with vaping and raising awareness about the dangers around smoking. Aspirations were raised and our pupils took an interest into pharmaceutical careers during our year 7 PSHE session. Thank you to Keele University for visiting and delivering thought provoking content.

Dates to remember.

Monday 19th February – Pupils return from half term.

19th February – 8th March Y11 Mock Exams

Thursday 7th March – Y9 Options Evening

Please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format if you have any questions. You can contact the office by email on info@bircheshead.org.uk.

Have a lovely half term break.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Dixon', written in a cursive style.

Ms K Dixon
Principal

