A photograph of Birchwood High School. The image features a large white circular graphic that frames the school's entrance. The entrance has a glass door and a large window above it. To the right of the entrance, there is a brick wall with a sign that reads "Sixth Form". The sky is blue with some clouds, and there are green leaves visible in the top left corner.

# **Birchwood High School**

## **Essential Information**





# Birchwood High Sixth Form Essential Information

## Autumn Term Dates 2023

4 September	Sixth Form Induction Day 2
5 September	Whole school return
23 – 27 October	Half Term
20 December (1:30pm finish)	End of Term

**For further term dates and inset days please check the school website**

Morning registration	8.40
End of school day	3.10
Lesson 6	3.10 – 4.00

## 1 Attendance and Appearance

Students are expected to wear smart 'business' wear throughout the year. Please see 'Sixth Form Dress Code' in the information pack for more details.

All students are expected to attend school full-time, arriving for registration at **8.40am** and remaining on site until **3.10 pm**, whether they have timetabled lessons or not. All students will be registered at the beginning of each lesson. In the event of unavoidable absences, through illness or bereavement, parent/carers should telephone the school on 01279 655936 option 1 explaining the reason, or email the Attendance Officer [dlegallienne@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:dlegallienne@birchwoodhigh.org.uk). This must be done for every day of absence.

We will still expect a letter from parents/carers explaining the absence on the student's return to school. On the rare occasion a student does need to leave the site, however briefly, they should first obtain **permission** from their Sixth Form Tutor or the Head of Sixth Form and must **always sign out** and **sign back** in again.

## 2 Academic Work

Students are expected to attend all timetabled lessons throughout the year. On the occasion when a teacher is absent students should go to see Mrs Crimes in the sixth form office to register and collect the work, which has been left for them. Students are likely to have in the region of three hours of home learning per night; they are expected to use their other study periods to carry out **Independent Learning Tasks (ILTs)**, wider reading/research or to start their home learning in school where they have the added advantage of access to all our resources and staff.

## 3 Academic Preparation for September

Preparation work for Year 12 was distributed during Induction Programme 1. This work will be uploaded to the Sixth Form area of the school website under the link "Preparation for Year 12". It is expected that students arrive prepared in September by completing any tasks set for their chosen subjects.

## 4 16-19 Bursary Fund

In addition to bursaries for students who are in care, care leavers or in receipt of income support (student not parent), the school holds a small hardship fund to help those students most in need. This money is designed to contribute towards course related expenses such as books, transport or compulsory subject trips. Those students who feel they may be eligible will need to complete and submit an application form for consideration. **A copy of our Bursary Fund Policy and an application form are included in this pack.**



## 5 Super-Curricular Activities

Throughout the year students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of super-curricular activities - from Sixth Form social trips to charity events and activities based in and around the school community. We would recommend that all students become as actively involved as possible. Apart from acquiring a wide range of experiences and undoubtedly raising their level of enjoyment within the school, any participation will be directly reflected in future references.

## 6 Work Experience

Following the exam period all Year 12 students will be asked to organise and undertake a week of work experience; the date for this is during the summer term (dates to be confirmed). **More information regarding work experience can be found on the sheet included in this information pack.**

## 7 Holidays

Sixth Form studies are vitally important to students' futures. Therefore, we will not authorise any holidays taken during term time.

## 8 Driving Lessons and Parking

We fully support the notion of students learning to drive and allow them to take up to one hour of their 'free' school time for driving lessons. However, we must insist that no driving lesson encroaches on any taught lesson, registration, pastoral period or assembly, and that form tutors are given **written advice** of these lessons **in advance**.

**There is no parking for students on the school site.**

## 9 Paid Employment

Many students have part-time paid employment. Again this is something we support but would draw your attention to published research which notes that once a student undertakes regular paid employment of more than nine hours in any one week their grades decrease by, on average, one grade for every three hours. Therefore a 'B' grade student who undertakes paid employment for 15 hours per week is likely to find his or her grade drop from 'B' to 'D' or even 'E/U' (fail) simply by spending too many hours in paid employment. We would therefore strongly recommend that students and parents seriously consider these implications before making any decisions regarding part-time work.

## 10 Planning YOUR Learning

It is essential that students map their independent learning time and record their Home Learning. At the start of each week, students will identify important dates, events and what they will be completing during their ILT sessions.

## 11 Six Lesson Day

Please be advised that Sixth Form lessons operate on a **6 lesson day** due to accommodating our broad curriculum offer. In most cases we try to keep to the normal running of the school day; however, some lessons may finish at 4:00pm. This should be taken into consideration before committing to any transport costs or part time work.

# Sixth Form Dress Code

Uniform should be exemplary at all times and there is no excuse for not wearing the correct school uniform, including to and from school.

*\* In general, if you are not sure whether something fits the following dress code, assume that it does not.*



We expect our students to dress in an appropriately professional manner, i.e. what you would wear in a formal office environment. All students must always wear the following:

**Smart attire:** Jacket or smart jumper (no logos) with trousers or skirt. Plain in colour.

**Plain (or subtly patterned\*) shirt or blouse:** Blouses should have a collar and sleeves and be of an opaque material. Shirt top buttons must be fastened, and shirts tucked in.

**Black or dark brown formal, low-heeled, shoes:** Dark socks should be worn with trousers, tights with a skirt.

**Tie** to be worn with shirt and trousers.



## Seasonal variations

In winter, a smart, roll neck jumper can be worn.

In summer, the following concessions are made:

- Short sleeves on shirts and blouses are permitted.

The following are **never appropriate**:


- Loungewear, hoodies or leggings.
- Stretchy fabrics (lycra etc.), for instance in 'tube' skirts. Skirts should be 'pencil' or 'A-line'.
- Cropped or low cut tops.
- Ill-fitting buttoned shirts which 'gape'.
- Skirts which are closer to the hip than the knee, or which 'ride up' excessively during normal wear/walking.
- Sheer/see-through fabrics (e.g. lace and chiffon).
- High-heeled shoes, stilettos, wedges, boots (including Dr Martens) and sandals

## Hair, jewellery and make-up

Our expectations for hair, jewellery and make-up are as follows:

- Hair must be neat and respectable with no extremes of style.
- Hair may be dyed in one natural colour. Any hair accessories must match and be minimal.
- Jewellery should be appropriate (sleepers and studs only, this includes small nose piercings – NO NOSE RINGS). Clear plastic 'plugs' may be used to keep piercings open.
- 'Natural look' day make-up and well-maintained nail varnish of a single colour is permitted.

**Students will carry a Business Wear Card with them in their lanyard which will be signed by a member of staff if they fail to meet the Business Wear standards. Two signatures or failure to present the card will result in an after school detention.**



## Business Wear Card

Name: .....

Form: .....

STAFF MEMBER TO SIGN AND DATE			
Businesswear Offence	Mark relevant offence	1st offence	2nd offence
Skirt is closer to the hip than the knee			
Skirt without tights/tube skirt			
Ill-fitting buttoned shirts which 'gape'			
Cropped/low cut top			
Top exposing shoulders			
Loungewear/hoodie			
Leggings			
Lack of smart shoes			
Top button undone			
No shirt/tie			
Lack of suit jacket/smart jumper			
No card = straight in to C2	2 X SIGNATURES = FRIDAY DT		
Refusal to hand over the card = C2			

## Year 12 Work Experience

At Birchwood we run a work experience programme in Year 12. **ALL** Year 12 students are expected to organise and undertake a week of work experience. The 'Work Experience Week' will be in the summer term (dates to be confirmed). It will be up to you to secure a work placement although we will do our best to help you if you require assistance.

It is essential that you begin to think about this work experience as early as you can and you should note that all 'paper work' will be needed in school **BEFORE** the spring half term in February 2024. This deadline is in place in order to allow us time to process all the information and to carry out the necessary Health and Safety checks; it also means that you will not be spending time trying to look for a placement during the lead up to the exam period!

**Ignoring work experience is NOT an option!**



If you need convincing of the benefits of work experience have a read of the following:

### Why is Work Experience Important?

**Work experience can get you started in your career, as well as helping you to pin down what you want to do.**

Work experience is important whether you want to stay on in education or get a job. It shows people that you've thought about what you want to do and that you have a realistic idea of what working life is like. The more experience you can get before you apply for your first full-time job, the better.

It will also give you a good opportunity to gain useful skills and experience working with a range of people from all sorts of different backgrounds. As well as showing your enthusiasm for your career choice, they are key factors which employers and universities will be looking for in your CV or UCAS form.

#### **Work experience helps you to:**

- Understand the everyday realities of working life
- Find out about your own abilities and limitations
- Communicate well with all sorts of different people
- Take charge of your own future
- Demonstrate your skills to employers

Even if you're the perfect person for a job, it's difficult for employers to know that without proof of what you can do. Work experience is an extremely important part of that proof.

## **Work experience helps you learn about yourself**

It's not all about impressing employers. Work experience also reveals things about you that will help you to choose the right career path. For example:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Are you a good communicator?
- Do you work well in a team?
- Do you enjoy the work as much as you expected?

If it turns out that the job isn't a good fit for you, then it's better to find out on a short placement than a full-time job.

(From Brightside website)

The following websites may help you:

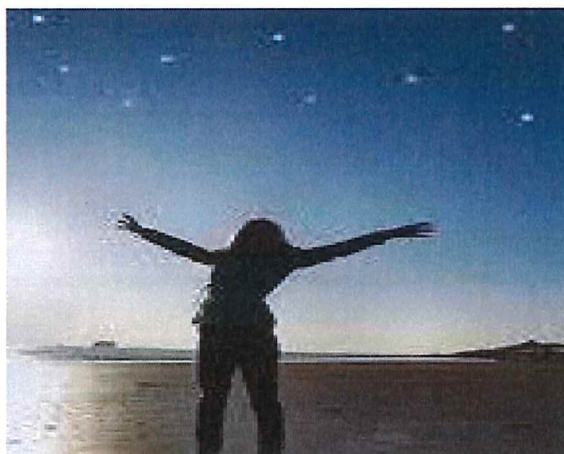
[www.allaboutcareers.com](http://www.allaboutcareers.com)

[www.studentladder.co.uk](http://www.studentladder.co.uk)

<https://www.brightknowledge.org/careers/work-experience?type=subcategory>

[www.hopinto.co.uk](http://www.hopinto.co.uk)

<https://uptree.co/>





## Post 18 Information, Advice and Guidance

At Birchwood Sixth Form we are committed to preparing you for your future beyond the school environment. We offer a planned programme of Career and Work Related Education built around the Unifrog online platform which encourages you to explore all of your post 18 options.



Unifrog is a one-stop-shop where students can easily explore their interests, then find and successfully apply for their next best step after school.

Unifrog will help you to explore your key interests and what career paths you can take to reach your goals!



The University Central Admission System (UCAS) is the portal for all university applications. All students wishing to make a university application will be guided through the application processes with timely information on how the system works.

The UCAS website has a wealth of information about Post 18 choices, including non-university pathways.



The Amazing Apprenticeship website is a useful source of information for everything to do with apprenticeships.



Find all you need to explore career opportunities in Hertfordshire - jobs, apprenticeships, support to make informed career decisions, explore the world of work in Hertfordshire, tips on gaining work experience, skills development and lots more....



If you are not sure of your Post 18 choices or are looking for individual 1:1 guidance you can book an appointment with a qualified advisor through Mrs Crimes.



## **Birchwood High School 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2023-24**

### **Statement of Intent**

At Birchwood High School, we are committed to closing the attainment gap between students from disadvantaged and more advantaged backgrounds, and ensuring that every young person participates in, and benefits from, a place in 16-19 education and training. The bursary is intended, therefore, to help eligible students with the essential costs of their studies, e.g. important books, equipment and travel costs.

We are dedicated to:

- Distributing 16-19 bursaries via a fair and equal process that is transparent, accountable and easily understood.
- Ensuring that information regarding the application, award and administration of 16 - 19 bursaries is publicly available via the school website and sixth form administrator.
- Widening access to, and participation in, 16-19 education and training.
- Monitoring and reviewing our policies to ensure effectiveness.
- Setting high targets and objectives to develop a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to implement policies, as much as is reasonably practicable.
- Sharing and acquiring best practice through partnerships with neighbouring settings.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- ESFA (2023) '16 to 19 bursary fund guide 2023 to 2024 academic year'
- Equality Act 2010

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy

### **The School's responsibilities**

The school will be responsible for setting eligibility criteria for students at the institution and will set conditions for receiving the bursary, such as regular attendance. Arrangements for applying for bursaries will be straightforward and confidential.

The needs of each student who applies for the bursary will be assessed by the setting and evidence will be obtained to support each application. The school will claim vulnerable bursaries from the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) for each eligible student.

Records will be kept by the setting of all assessments and payments. The application process will maintain confidentiality.

The setting will make this policy available early enough for students to be able to use the information when deciding which post-16 setting to attend.

The setting will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 when setting its criteria and will not discriminate against students because of their protected characteristics.

The setting will inform the ESFA of the total amount of any unspent funds (not previously reported) from any year up to and including the 2021/2022 academic year, by completing the ESFA [online enquiry form](#) no later than 31 March each year.

The setting will ensure it completes the new individualised learner record (ILR) or census fields to provide data on the number of students participating in extended work placements.

### **What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?**

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The fund is made available from the government through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and is administered by the school.

There are two types of 16-19 Bursary:

**Vulnerable** student bursary and **Discretionary** student bursary

### **Who is eligible to apply for 16-19 Bursary Funding?**

- To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2023 to 2024 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2023
- Students must meet the residency criteria in [ESFA funding regulations](#) for post-16 provision in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

### **How does the School assess applications and allocate 16-19 Bursary funding?**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a **limited fund** and the School only has a **small amount** of money to distribute. Students must fall into one of the following categories and students and their parents must be prepared to show evidence of genuine hardship.

- There will be 2 priority groups categorised as high & medium
- For the 2023-24 academic year all applications must be received by **Friday 8 September 2023**
- Consideration will be given for retrospective payments from the 1 September 2023
- Assessment of financial need is required for all applicants

### **How does the School pay Bursary Funding?**

Payment may be in kind (for example by meeting the cost of a trip or providing uniform or a bus pass) or made by Bank transfer depending on the circumstances and purpose of the bursary.

#### **High priority group - Vulnerable student bursary**

The School's eligibility criteria for receiving a vulnerable bursary will include students who are

- LAC (this includes those classed as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child)
- Previously LAC (PLAC)



- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

**Evidence will be required to support the basis of the claim and the financial assistance required**

Eligible students may receive a bursary of up to £1200, dependent on need, to support them with costs such as transport, equipment etc.

Please note that students who meet the criteria for bursaries for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources. There is a possibility of no award or a limited award.

Proof will be needed to evidence that a student is eligible for the bursary, for example:

- **LAC or PLAC:** written confirmation, such as a letter or an email, of current or previous LAC status from the relevant LA (the LA that looks after them or provides their leaving care services)
- **In receipt of Income Support:** a copy of the Income Support award notice, which must evidence that the student is entitled to the benefit in their own right, and confirm that the student can attend FE or training
- **In receipt of Universal Credit:** copies of the Universal Credit award notice from the last [three months](#) to estimate assumed income for the year which must evidence that the student is entitled to the benefit in their own right, as well as additional documentation to confirm their independent status, e.g. a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificate, or utility bills
- **In receipt of Universal Credit or ESA and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments:** a copy of the Universal Credit or ESA award from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), as well as evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

The School will only submit a funding claim to the SBSS once sufficient evidence has been provided and the setting has confirmed that the student needs financial support to participate.

**Medium priority group – Discretionary student bursary**

The School will ensure that discretionary funding is allocated to the students who are most in need of financial support. The School's eligibility criteria for receiving a discretionary bursary will include:

- Students who are completing a high-cost course (over £2,000) in which specialist equipment and clothes are required, including industry placements.
- Students living in a low-income household.
- Students who are from a single parent family or have one or more dependent siblings in their family.
- Students who have additional responsibilities, such as being a young carer or parent.
- Students who travel greater than [eight](#) miles to the setting

Discretionary bursaries may be awarded for students in low-income households. The setting will use household income, in some way, to help establish the amount of support awarded to a student, if possible.

The amount awarded will be dependent on the amount of income – this will be allocated on different levels.

Students who apply will be assessed individually. This assessment will be documented, and evidence to support the claims will be obtained and retained for auditing purposes.

The assessment will be based on a student's financial needs.

The School will not make blanket or flat-rate payments to all students or students in the income bands outlined above without considering the actual needs of each student.

The School will use in-kind payments over cash payments for discretionary bursaries wherever possible.

The School will manage the discretionary bursary to keep payments within budget. Where possible, the setting will retain a small emergency fund from its allocation to support students who face exceptional circumstances during the year due to a change in their situation that impacts on their ability to participate in education – evidence of a student's eligibility for emergency funds, the individual assessment and their actual participation costs will be held for audit purposes as for any other bursary award.

In individual cases of severe hardship, the bursary fund will be used where appropriate to provide food support for a student on the days they attend their programme of study. Food support will be provided where the setting believes the student to be in real need, and will not require checks on household income or other evidence-gathering that would usually be required.

Where food support is provided, copies of the following records will be retained for audit purposes:

- The total number of students provided food support
- The number of days this support is given to each student
- The total value of support given to each student along with the rationale for its provision
- Signed confirmation of receipt funding by the student or actual spend receipts

Each school should exercise their discretion in each case as this scheme is not intended to continue on an ongoing basis for any individual pupil. This flexibility relates to food support only.

**NB All bursary awards are dependent on students meeting agreed standards of behaviour and attendance as set out in the Sixth Form Contract. This will be assessed termly and if a student's attendance falls below the expected percentage then the Bursary may be withdrawn.**

**Please return to: Mr D Bull, Birchwood High School, Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford  
CM23 5BD**

Student Name: .....

would like to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund for the following priority group:

**High** ☐                      **Medium** ☐

under criteria:- .....

I enclose the following evidence as requested  
*(please tick relevant box)*

- ☐ **Income Support letter (no more than 28 days old) or Universal Credit Award Notice**
- ☐ **First 4 pages of your Child Tax Credit Awards letter for 2023/24 or Universal Credit Award Notice**

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Please note that all applications will be treated in the strictest confidence**



