



Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

Co-Headteachers: Ms T Nickson BEd (Hons), MA, NPQH, FCCT

Mr A Wood BA (Oxon), PGCE, MBA, NPQH

Woods Avenue, Hatfield, Herts AL10 8NL T: 01707 275331

Email: admin@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk Website: www.bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk

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Dear Parents / Carers,

First of all, a huge welcome to all our new Year 7 parents and carers; your daughters have settled in very quickly and we look forward to getting to know them and for them to feel truly included in Bishop's life.

As has already been documented in the local press and on our Facebook page, we again celebrated a successful set of A Level, BTEC and GCSE results with our Years 13 and 11 students over the summer. Their continued efforts with their learning, the quality teaching they received and the support of families all worked together to achieve that success and we are sure you will work with us going forward to secure the same for your daughters. Once official figures have been released by the DfE regarding academic performance nationally, we will be able to share with you how we compare with other schools. Our preliminary analysis indicates that we are achieving above average results at all levels and that our students are making beyond expected progress.

Please read through the information in this newsletter carefully; it provides details about the forthcoming year at Bishop's that you may need to refer to later especially term dates; please note that the term dates for 2020-21 have been amended since the previous newsletter. There is also some important information about Parent Governor vacancies. Please also email us with any response to this newsletter or any subsequent query as your opinions and views are highly valued. We are not always able to respond personally to every piece of feedback but assure you that all points of view are noted and frequently acted upon.

In order to ensure that we continue to communicate effectively and efficiently with you, please let us know of any changes to family circumstances, address, telephone number, email address or emergency contact details by email to the address above. We would also like to remind you of our text facility for informing us if your daughter is absent or late – please text to **07860 095596** giving your daughter's name and form on each day of absence and the reason for the absence.

Please visit our website regularly as there is some important information on there that you may wish to refer to throughout the year:

- The calendar of events for the year
- Homework Policy and Marking Policy
- Curriculum information relating to your daughter's studies
- Home School Agreement
- Privacy Notice

Please also continue to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, links to which can be found on our website.



"This is an OUTSTANDING school" - Ofsted 2016



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Staff Changes

We have had a small number of staff changes this year following some retirements and promotions. Our staffing is increasing as our school expands. We welcome Mrs Hughes as our second Deputy Headteacher, Miss Ekins in the English Faculty, Ms Davies into the Humanities Faculty, Mrs Garratt in Maths, Mrs Price in Maths/Science and Mrs Ameen and Mrs Short in Learning Support.

We welcome three colleagues on the School Direct Programme – Miss Smith in Humanities, Mrs Gonzalez in Modern Foreign Languages and Miss Camp in Science.

Your first port of call for pastoral issues, eg lost PE kit, uniform problems, behaviour issues etc is your daughter's Form Tutor. Should there be a need to speak to someone else, we have five Heads of Year who will be available for more serious issues. These are:

Head of Year 7 (ext 265)	-	Miss Parkin
Head of Year 8 (ext 218)	-	Mrs Alliott
Head of Year 9 (ext 263)	-	Miss Lawrence
Head of Year 10 (ext 264)	-	Mrs Dayton
Head of Year 11 (ext 239)	-	Miss Graves

They can be contacted on the usual school number and then the extension given above or by email to the school's admin address. As usual, it is preferable if you contact your daughter's **Form Tutor** in the first instance if you have a problem, but the staff listed above may also be able to help deal with difficulties. The Senior Leadership Team is only to be involved if a matter is deemed to be **very serious** and cannot be resolved by the Form Tutor and Head of Year. Any matters concerning Child Protection will be dealt with by Mr Dudley (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Mrs Jackson (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). Contact for Safeguarding issues should be through this email address - safeguarding@bishopatfield.herts.sch.uk

Communications with Parents / Carers

Please take careful note of the information in the previous section regarding contacting the school with issues. We must emphasise that we have established systems at Bishop's to enable issues to be dealt with at an appropriate level by the appropriate person. Specific curriculum matters are dealt with by the subject teacher in the first instance or by the Head of Faculty if necessary. Pastoral matters are dealt with by the Form Tutor in the first instance and then by the Head of Year as required. If any of these members of staff feel that the matter is more serious, then it will be referred to the relevant person on the Senior Leadership Team whose roles relate more to strategic leadership than day-to-day management. If the SLT becomes over-involved in day-to-day management, we would not have the time to action the improvement strategies that are making Bishop's so successful in terms of pupil progress.

We do assure you that the girls' academic progress, safety and welfare are of paramount importance to us and are confident that we have teams and individuals in place to address all the girls' needs and provide answers to parents/carers.

Pupil Planners

We would like to take this opportunity at the start of the academic year, to remind you of the importance of your daughter's planner/homework diary. This planner must be used to record all of your daughter's homework and important notes and dates to ensure she is organised and well prepared for her learning. It should also be checked and signed by yourself and your daughter's Form Tutor every week. By monitoring the homework diary regularly, we can get

a good indication how well your daughter is coping with the additional workload of the new academic year and put in any support as appropriate.

We have introduced a new section in the planner in which pupils will fill in their House Point totals at the end of every term and there is comment box below this for you to record your reflections and sign to acknowledge you have read this. Your daughter's Form Tutor will also sign to acknowledge he/she has read your comments. You can get a more up to date House Point total for your daughter, by logging in to Go4Schools which we would encourage you to do regularly.

Car Parking and the Drop-off Zone

Some reminders -

- **No parking or waiting** is permitted in the drop-off zone – the double yellow lines apply as on the public highway; parents/carers should **not** arrive early and wait as this is **not** a parking area – you will be asked to move on
- When picking up, do not enter the area until you know your daughter is ready – again, this is NOT a waiting area – if you arrive early, you should wait on the road or in one of the nearby car parks until the time you have agreed with your daughter that she should be waiting; please do NOT block local residents' driveways
- **Only** the defined hatched area should be used for dropping off and picking up girls
- At the end of the day, due to the fact we frequently have coaches collecting girls for fixtures or returning them after a trip, parents/carers CANNOT access the drop-off/pick-up zone until after 3.30pm. However, please note that waiting in the drop off zone is still not permitted.
- Reg's Coaches will now be picking up at 4.10pm to enable more girls to access enrichment activities and for girls who have timetabled lessons until 3.50pm. A supervised homework club is also available.

Group / Set changes

We monitor the girls' progress in all their subjects very carefully right from the start of Year 7. From time to time we need to move the girls to different groups/sets based on their progress so that they are best supported to extend their learning and achieve their potential. We do not stream but band more loosely by ability in some subjects.

In Year 7, girls are in bands for Maths, Computing and Science and any movement from group to group tends to occur at the end of each term. In Years 8 and 9 the banding continues in Maths, Computing and Science; additionally in Year 9, the girls will be further banded in English, Humanities (Geography, History and RS) and Languages.

When girls move into Key Stage 4 and GCSE study, the banding continues for English, Maths and Science but not for option subjects as girls naturally choose subjects that they enjoy and can achieve well in and in many cases, there will only be one group for a particular subject, eg Music.

Girls know their classes when they receive their timetables at the start of the year and whenever a change of band / set occurs we tell parents / carers and urge you to contact us if you have any queries about this.

Open Evening

This will be held for prospective pupils and their parents/carers on **Tuesday 1st October**. A separate letter will be sent out informing you of early closure details on this date.

Extra-Curricular Activities / Enrichment Programme

We are running a full programme of clubs and activities at lunchtimes and after school and girls have received information about the different activities that they can take part in and will have the chance to try some out this week. All girls are expected to participate in at least one activity and we know that many girls will choose more than one; we

hope that the girls will be actively involved in every session as we know that this enhances their well-being and overall enjoyment of school (and they get house points)!

School Trips

During the year we run a number of school trips which are designed to enhance the curriculum and allow the girls to experience the reality of what we are teaching. These visits are extremely valuable and are usually followed up with work in the classroom. It is possible that a trip may be to a place where your daughter has already been but where this is the case, it will have a different emphasis and slant and connect to the work she is currently doing, which will be very different say, from a primary school trip.

It is very important that we receive your responses via email with voluntary contributions (paid via WisePay) quickly so that we can confirm if a trip will go ahead. We expect all pupils to take advantage of these opportunities that we create; learning outside the classroom is invariably a learning memory that is maintained for life.

Our House System

Each pupil and staff member belongs to a House and will be competing throughout the year to win the Bishop's House Cup. Positions of responsibility within the Houses are as follows:

House Name	Head of House	Sixth Form House Captain
House Austen	Miss Grossman	Nicole Edwards
House Franklin	Dr Bune	Megan Frost
House Hadid	Mr Kench / Mrs Johns	Jasmine Reed-Purvis
House Parr	Miss Hallauer	Tammy Chan
House Seacole	Miss Maisey	Susan Bugg

Pupils can win House points for positive behaviour such as attending Enrichment clubs, 100% attendance, excellent academic work and effort and winning House competitions. Every pupil who attends an Enrichment club receives a silver token (worth one House Point) to place in her House perspex collector by the pupil entrance of the school. Pupils who represent the school in performances or fixtures will receive a gold token (worth five House Points). Pupils can also lose House points for negative behaviour such as homework referrals, lateness to school and detentions.

The House which finishes the year with the highest number of House points will be rewarded with the House Cup, their House name on the school plaque and a celebration event for pupils and staff in their House at the end of the Summer Term. Last year's winner was House Austen.

Money

We are strongly recommending that all payments to the school should be made using WisePay as it is safer and quicker. Most parents are already using this system. If you require further information on this please contact the school's Finance Office (option 2 on the school's automated phone system). On the rare occasion when payment may be made in cash, pupils should not give it to Form Tutors or leave it for someone else to hand in but wait to see one of the Finance staff and then ask for a receipt (usually before school starts, at break or from 1pm). Without this receipt we cannot be held

responsible if the money is mislaid or stolen. All valuables should be secured in lockers and not left in bags in corridors. We discourage girls from carrying cash with them.

Overdraft / Loan facility – any pupil who has forgotten her lunch or lunch money should come to the Finance Office for a loan. The loan will be added to her cashless catering account in the form of an overdraft facility and will be for a maximum of £2.40, which is sufficient for the hot meal and pudding of the day. Loans cannot be used for drinks as water is available through our water dispensers around the school. The loan must be repaid by topping up the pupil's cashless catering account which will be locked until the loan is repaid.

Free School Meals

We'd like to encourage every parent and carer who thinks that his/her daughter might be eligible for Free School Meals to contact HCC to find out if she is. There are significant advantages to receiving free school meals in that once on the list, pupils may receive assistance in paying for school trips, qualify for a bursary to help towards their Sixth Form studies and then meet the criteria for a grant towards university education. Girls receiving free school meals have the value of the main meal (currently £2.40) automatically deducted from the cost of purchases made at lunchtime. This ensures that confidentiality is maintained. Further information can be found on www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals

Uniform

So that we can have a very positive start to the school year and focus immediately on teaching and learning, we would appreciate you taking the time to ensure that your daughter –

- has the full, correct school uniform with her skirt at the correct length
- if wearing ankle socks, then these are ANKLE socks and not trainer socks – the difference is that they should clearly have a cuff that goes about 8cm up the leg and not just be confined within the shoe
- has proper school shoes as laid out in the uniform guidelines
- has removed all nail varnish, gel nails, coloured hair extensions etc that she will have enjoyed wearing over the holidays but which are not suitable for school
- is not wearing make-up and has hair all of one natural colour
- complies with the rules regarding jewellery, that is only wearing a wrist watch and one pair of small gold or silver stud earrings, one on each ear lobe – no other piercings or jewellery are allowed
- **NO** smart watches are allowed - if wearing these they will be confiscated until the end of term.

With your co-operation and support, this should all lead to a smooth start to the year; we're sure that you don't want calls from the school on the first day asking you to collect your daughter because she is breaking these fundamental rules.

If your daughter has outgrown or no longer requires her uniform, eg new Year 12 students, then the Parents' Association would welcome any additions to their current stock, especially skirts which are very low in stock currently. This can be brought to reception at the school.

Attendance

Please let us know by texting the school on **07860 095596 before 9am on each day** of your daughter's absence that she will not be coming to school on that day and the reason why. This includes occasions when we have sent a girl home because she has become ill during the school day – we still need confirmation of the illness by text if the absence continues. We do ask for your co-operation in this matter as it is part of our continuing target to maintain and further improve levels of attendance. There is no doubt that there is a strong link between high attendance and achievement and we know you will all want your daughters to achieve at the highest level. Administrative staff will text/phone the

homes of any absentees for whom we have not had an explanation on every day of absence. Please read the section below which outlines the issuing of penalty notices to parents/carers whose daughter's attendance falls below a certain level. We urge you to read this carefully.

We would also like to emphasise that **permission** must be sought from the school for any leave of absence, eg. Dance exams, representing the county at a sports event etc. We cannot stress enough that continuity of education is crucial in determining your daughter's success and any interruption to her education can create gaps in knowledge which are often difficult to fill. We enclose this and next year's term dates with this letter and urge you to note these carefully when booking holidays. Whilst we understand that in some cases (and we assure you that each case is considered individually) it is necessary to take a girl out of school for a family event, we continue to disapprove of and, in line with guidance from the Department for Education, refuse to authorise holidays taken in term time. Time lost from the learning environment cannot be made up and returning after a one week holiday absence can cause upset to a girl who discovers her class has moved on in a particular topic or subject area.

To put the attendance situation in context, any girl whose attendance drops to 90% will have missed 19 days of school in one year, that is, 114 lessons! This can make a REAL difference to success in qualifications.

We do understand that some medical practitioners make this difficult, but all appointments with dentists / orthodontists / optometrists / doctors should be made outside school hours or during the holidays, whenever possible. We would also encourage a return to school after appointments made during the day.

Parent/Carer Volunteering in school

We are always interested to hear of parents/carers who may be able to spare a couple of hours to help us. The school library is always glad to have help from parents. If you have an hour or two to spare on a regular basis and would like to help with a number of routine tasks, the librarians would be pleased to hear from you; please email the librarians, Mrs Roth and Mrs Allcock at Library@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk including your name and a daytime contact telephone number. If you have any other suggestions for how you can be of help, please email the main admin address at the top of this letter.

Parent Governor Vacancies

There are two vacancies for parent governors on the school's governing body. Governors make extremely valuable contributions in determining school policy. All parents are eligible and we appreciate the varied input they offer, from support in making financial decisions to interviewing candidates for posts within school. If you would like to stand for election please complete and return form at the end of this letter to the school office by 9.00am on Monday 16th September 2019. Details regarding the role of a Governor have also been sent out with this as a separate PDF.

You will need to ask another parent/carer of a pupil at the school to sign the form. Please be aware that regulations require everyone elected or appointed to a governing body to undergo a pre-appointment check which will include a criminal background check. This is to ensure the safety of the pupils. If you are elected and you subsequently decline to undergo such a check, you will disqualify yourself.

Please give brief details about yourself (not more than 80 words) on the form. If an election is needed these details will be copied and sent to all parents/carers with the ballot papers. Please note that the 80 word limit will be strictly enforced. Any statement with more than 80 words will be returned to the candidate for amendment. If the number of nominations is the same as or less than the number of vacancies, then the people nominated will be deemed elected unopposed. If there are not enough nominations, the governing body has the duty to appoint parent governors to fill the remaining vacancies.

The governing body has determined that the term of office for a parent governor is four years. If you are elected you may serve the full term of office even if your child leaves the school before your term of office finishes. The governing body has also decided that all governors will be members of the Academy Trust and be involved in all strategic decision making at this level.

If an election is necessary we will send you a ballot paper during the week commencing 16th September 2019. Only parents/carers of children registered at the school are entitled to stand or vote in the election. A parent/carer who is paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year or is an elected member of the LA may not stand for election. Each parent/carer will be sent one ballot paper regardless of how many children they have at the school, and each parent/carer will have one vote per vacancy. The ballot will be secret and you will be notified of the result as soon as possible afterwards.

In most cases it will be obvious whether you are a parent/carer. For the purpose of the election of a parent governor, a parent is:

- someone who has parental responsibility* or
- someone who looks after the child on a day-to-day basis (but does not have “parental responsibility”).

*A person has ‘parental responsibility’ if

- a. she is the child’s natural mother; **or**
- b. he is the child’s natural father and either was married to the mother on the day of the child’s birth or subsequently or has entered into a legal parental responsibility agreement with the mother or has been granted a residence order from the court directing the child will live with him or registered or re-registered the child’s birth after 1 December 2003; **or**
- c. the child lives with that person as the result of a court order. If you have any questions about whether you are eligible to stand or vote in the election or about anything else in this letter, please contact me.

We look forward to receiving your nominations.

Supporting the school

We appreciate the support that many parents and carers have given the school in recent years. If you feel able to support us by volunteering your time - for instance to help in the library, to organise a fundraising event or to serve refreshments at an event, we would be delighted to hear from you. We would also welcome any parents who wish to sign up to small regular donations to our School Fund as we are currently saving up to improve our learning resources.

We are having a “Happy Bag Collection” in October and would appreciate it if you would start to set aside any unwanted clothing ready to bring in when we have a specific date for the collection. This activity has always been well supported by parents and is a valuable source of income for the school.

One simple way to support us is to register for easyfundraising and use this for your online shopping. It is very easy to use and every time you make a purchase from a retailer such as M&S or Tesco, the school benefits from a donation from the supplier. There are no hidden charges. For more information, please see www.easyfundraising.org.uk.

We look forward to another successful and exciting year with all your daughters achieving their best!

Yours sincerely

Ms T Nickson & Mr A Wood
Co-Headteachers

GOVERNOR NOMINATION FORM

Your name

(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address

Name of child

I have a child at the school and hereby nominate myself for election as a governor. I understand that if elected I will have to undergo a pre-appointment check. Biographical details (80 words maximum) for circulation with the voting paper are given below.

Signature

Seconded* by:

(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address

Name of child

Signature

*The seconder must be a parent/carer of a pupil at the school.

Biographical details (80 words maximum):

Your completed nomination form must be returned to the school office by:

Date: Monday 16th September 2019 Time: 9.00am

SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2019-2020

AUTUMN TERM 2019

Monday 2nd September to Friday 20th December 2019

Half-Term: Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November

INSET Day 1 – Monday 2nd September (no pupil attendance)

INSET Day 2 – Friday 4th October (no pupil attendance)

OCCASIONAL Day – Friday 29th November (no pupil attendance)

SPRING TERM 2020

Monday 6th January to Friday 3rd April 2020

Half-Term: Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February

INSET Day 3 – Friday 14th February (no pupil attendance)

SUMMER TERM 2020

Monday 20th April to Tuesday 21st July 2020

Half-Term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May

INSET Day 4 – Monday 20th July (no pupil attendance)

INSET Day 5 – Tuesday 21st July (no pupil attendance)

NB - Early May Bank Holiday will be Friday 8th May 2020

to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day

UPDATED PROVISIONAL

SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2020-2021

AUTUMN TERM 2020

Wednesday 2nd September to Friday 18th December 2020

Half-Term: Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October

SPRING TERM 2021

Monday 4th January to Friday 26th March 2021

Half-Term: Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February

SUMMER TERM 2021

Monday 12th April to Thursday 22nd July 2021

Half-Term: Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June

NB - INSET days to be confirmed

