



# Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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## Newsletter - End of Spring Term

Dear Parents/Carers,

I must start by congratulating everyone involved in the school production of Sister Act Jr! What a fantastic show it was and I was so impressed with the performances. It was especially lovely to see pupils from Year 7 right through to Year 13 involved and working so hard together to create such an entertaining show. Of course none of it would have been possible without the incredible dedication of our staff in working with the pupils, giving up many hours of their time. I want to especially thank Mrs James, Mr Kench and Mrs McKinnell for their contributions, though I'm sure they will tell me that they relied on many other staff members to help them make it all such a success.

### **Bishop's #BEST - Fundraising**

I wrote to you last week about our fundraising efforts to support the exciting facilities improvement projects that we are undertaking. You can read all about our plans here: [Bishop's BEST – Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School](#). These will make a huge difference to the provision we are able to offer and are an investment both for our current and future pupils. I am always very reluctant to ask our school community to make donations to the school, especially at a time when I know that many household budgets are tight. However, you will no doubt have seen recent news reports about cuts in public sector funding and I am afraid these apply to Bishop's in a very significant way. I am very concerned about the impact on our overall budget and so we really do **need your help**.

We want to make the new building, classrooms, 6th Form spaces and staff facilities really attractive places. Any donation, large or small, will make a difference. Please look out for fundraising events coming soon (including our Quiz night on 15th May). We held a non-uniform day today and if you have not already made your £2 donation please do so. You can also donate as little as £5 directly through our JustGiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/bishophatfield> or by Wisepay here [Bishops Hatfield Girls School](#). If you feel able to make a more substantial donation, please do let us know - we would like to make sure that we acknowledge your generosity and have this recognised in a donors board, either individually or using company sponsors.

A huge thank you to those who have already made donations - it is really encouraging to see the amount totting up. If we manage to raise £25 per pupil in the coming months we will be well on our way to our £25,000 target. If you can afford more, then please donate as we know that others will not be able to.

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*"Pupils flourish and support each other to succeed"*



## Free School Meals

As stated above, we know that many families have suffered financial difficulties in recent times and encourage them to check their eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM). You can do this here [Free school meals](#). The funding is allocated to a pupil's Wisepay lunch account and so they simply use their thumb to pay for lunch, alongside everyone else. Even if this is only required for a short period of time it is still worth applying as this will trigger Pupil Premium funding to the school which can be used to subsidise things like school trips and visits, books and equipment and uniform. Please contact the school if you need help with an application.

## Catering

We are pleased to announce that we have a new catering company, Innovate, starting with us after Easter. We are really encouraged by the enthusiasm and energy they are bringing to redesign the catering area and to the new, fresh, healthier menu they will introduce. We will see a significant change after the Easter break. Find out more here [Catering – Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School](#) We are looking forward to working with Innovate over the coming years and we are sure pupils and staff will enjoy the changes as well.

## Year 7 and Sixth Form Admissions

Secondary school allocations took place a few weeks ago and you may have read in the press about the decline in pupil numbers in some areas. Bishop's had over 500 applications for 155 places, with 226 of these placing Bishop's as first choice. I am told that we are one of the most oversubscribed schools in the County and we have a waiting list for places in all year groups.

I am also pleased to see that we are getting record numbers of applications from external candidates wanting to join our Sixth Form. Those applying from other schools remark upon our strong academic record but also on the extensive number of extra-curricular opportunities we offer. They also comment on the inclusive environment and on the range of leadership roles that give students the confidence to take the next steps after leaving school. The Department for Education recently published performance data for school Sixth Forms and **Bishop's was placed in the top 10% of schools in the country for A Level results**. This is a testament to the dedication and hard work of students and staff. Academic results are not everything though, and I am equally proud of the contribution our students make, in and out of school, giving me optimism that they will go on to make a really positive contribution to society when they leave us.

## Social Media

Social media is obviously a great way to stay in touch and communicate. It is also something that there are increasing concerns about in relation to young people's wellbeing. I am sure that many of you will have seen news stories or watched recent television dramas that highlight these concerns. As a school we do work hard to educate our pupils about the use of social media, in particular the dangers of getting involved in any form of inappropriate communication. It is obviously impossible for us to 'police' this at school and so we do ask all parents to spend time monitoring their child's social media accounts and Apps. As a school we strongly advise that pupils do not have access to phones or other technology after a certain cut off time each evening. There is growing evidence that allowing teenagers to have access to these devices overnight is damaging to their wellbeing as this is often when the most inappropriate content is shared which also leads to highly disrupted sleep patterns.

There are many ways to stay connected **positively** with what's happening at school beyond this newsletter, depending on your preferred mode of communication. Follow us on **Facebook, Instagram, X or LinkedIn** for the latest updates and announcements. [Socials – Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School](#)

Don't miss our **Bishop's Blog** which we send out once a quarter straight to your inbox. It offers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at what our pupils are getting up to whether it is in the classroom, on trips or in sporting achievements.

Be sure to also explore our **website** [Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School](#), where you'll find answers to many of your questions—from letters sent home and the catering menu to whom to speak to and snapshots from our latest events. Keep an eye out for a whole page dedicated to our upcoming #BEST building and remodelling project. And for those of you thinking ahead of sixth form, don't forget to check out our newly launched Sixth Form page for all the details [Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School](#)

## Uniform

As we move into the summer term I am giving the usual reminder about uniform, make-up and jewellery. The vast majority of our pupils adhere to our expectations really well. Please do support the school by:

- not allowing your child to get a nose piercing or multiple ear piercings, until they join the 6th Form
- not allowing them to have nail extensions or eyelash extensions
- not allowing them to dye their hair unnatural colours
- ensuring that they have skirt of an appropriate length
- not allowing them to wear items of jewellery apart from a watch

We will confiscate items that are not permitted and on rare occasions have had to send pupils home if they do not comply with our expectations. This can be both embarrassing and inconvenient for parents/carers.

## Attendance

I would like to remind you of our expectations in relation to pupil attendance. As we move into the latter half of the summer term we can receive requests from parents and carers to authorise additional days of holiday due to trips or flights being arranged before the school term has come to an end. **Please can we remind you that these requests will not be authorised.** We believe it gives an important message to the pupils that at Bishop's we take advantage of all the learning time we are allocated. This does not change as we approach the end of the school year. Our staff continue to prepare and deliver high standards of learning in the classroom right up until the end of term and if pupils do not attend school for those last few lessons of the year then they will miss out on these learning opportunities.

We also want to remind you that this academic year the Department for Education updated the statutory requirements regarding morning and afternoon attendance marks. Please note that if a pupil arrives after 9.10 a.m. without a valid reason for lateness then they are marked as U-unauthorised lateness, which is the same as an unauthorised absence being recorded for the whole morning. Please could you also ensure that when you contact the school to report your child's absence that you provide a clear explanation for the absence. One word explanations such as 'unwell' make it difficult for the attendance team to code absences appropriately within DFE guidelines.

## Communication with school

The partnership between home and school makes all the difference to our pupils' successes and we do our very best to build positive relationships with everyone in our community. It is perhaps a sign of the times we are living in that at a recent Headteacher Conference I attended a whole session was devoted to managing parental complaints. I completely respect any parent or carer's right to raise a concern with the school and I am always open to suggestions for how we can improve. However, we seem to be increasingly living in a world where people are quick to blame and make accusations without taking the time to consider whether this is the best way to achieve a desired outcome. There will inevitably be times when staff get things wrong, just as we have all made mistakes as parents/carers; we are humans not robots. The best way to resolve issues is to work with us, not against us, so please bear this in mind in your communications with the school. I would ask that when raising concerns you are mindful of this and do so in a spirit of enquiry rather than confrontation and accusation.

I would particularly urge parents/carers to consider carefully whether your child's account of events at school may be the full picture. All pupils will have good days and bad days at school and research shows that the teenage brain is often emotional rather than rational. No doubt on occasion these emotions will be played out at home, with your child complaining about or criticising things that have happened at school. There will also be times when this is an attempt by the child to deflect from something they have themselves done wrong. It is often very tempting to jump in to try to fix these problems or to place blame. Obviously it is very important that you listen to your child. However, when taking their account do please consider that this may not be the full story and I would urge you to pause before accusing the school or staff of mishandling things. We can only resolve problems if we work together and jumping to conclusions about what has happened purely based on what your child has told you is not supporting the school but potentially undermining what we do. This can also cause some embarrassment to parents when they become aware of the full story.

## House Competition

The latest scores are (there is plenty to play for with lots of points available in the Summer Term):

|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| Austen   | 23762 House Points |
| Franklin | 19989 House Points |
| Hadid    | 19573 House Points |
| Parr     | 21135 House Points |
| Seacole  | 17587 House Points |

And special congratulations to the following pupils who have the highest number of points in their year:

|        |                          |
|--------|--------------------------|
| Year 7 | Catherine Moody 7Au      |
| Year 8 | Leanna Lee 8Pa           |
| Year 9 | Millie Latimer-Nagar 9Au |

|         |                    |
|---------|--------------------|
| Year 10 | Blessing Ajei 10Au |
| Year 11 | Willow Wright 11Fr |
| Year 12 | Penelope Dunn 12Pa |
| Year 13 | Alice Hoxha 13Pa   |

### Staff changes

This term we say goodbye to two of our Mathematics teachers, Mrs Price and Ms Hurley. Between them they have given nearly 14 years of service to the school and we wish them well in their next steps. Mrs Price may return to do some work with us, whilst Ms Hurley is relocating with her family to Kent, but we hope that she will stay in touch. We are very fortunate to have recruited two experienced Mathematics teachers to replace them and Mr Neiman and Mr Thallon will be joining us at the start of next term. I also wanted to take the opportunity to formally welcome two staff who have already joined us during the maternity leaves of Mrs Redpath and Ms Hussain: Mr Bielak has joined the Science Faculty and Mrs Wells the Health Faculty. Next term we will be welcoming a familiar face in Mrs Broderick back to the school as well as a new Learning Support Assistant, Miss Webster. Also from the start of next term, Miss Ekins will be taking up the new role of Deputy Sendco. I am sure that you will want to join me in wishing the very best to our leavers and to those joining us or taking on new roles at Bishop's. You may well be aware of the national difficulties in recruiting and retaining school staff and I am incredibly lucky to have such a supportive and dedicated team.

### Term Dates

We return for the Summer Term on **Tuesday 22nd April with the usual 8.35 am start time**. I know that our staff are looking forward to a well-deserved break after rising to all the challenges of the term and I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their efforts.

Please note that we have made a slight change to our arrangements for the start of the **Autumn Term 2025** due to needing to manage the move to our new building facilities. These are published below and on our website.

As ever, if you have any feedback please do email the school admin address; I am not always able to reply to each response individually, but all comments are noted and acted upon where appropriate.

Best wishes to you and your family for the holiday. I know that many of you celebrate religious festivals at this time of year and would like to wish everyone the very best in their celebrations.

Mr A Wood



Headteacher

**SUMMER TERM 2025**  
***(Tuesday 22nd April to Friday 18th July 2025)***

**Half-Term:** Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May

*INSET Days – Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd July (no pupil attendance - disaggregated for staff)*

**School Term and Holiday Dates 2025/2026**

**AUTUMN TERM 2025**  
***(Monday 1st September - Friday 19th December)***

**Half-Term:** Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October

*Monday 1st September - Academy Day to facilitate building move (no pupil attendance)*

*Tuesday 2nd September - INSET Day (no pupil attendance)*

*Wednesday 3rd September - Year 7 Induction & 6th Form Induction for Y12 & Y13 only*

*Thursday 4th September - Year 12 and 13 lessons start at all Consortium sites*

*Friday 5th September - Teaching for all years 7-13*

*INSET Day - Thursday 2nd October (no pupil attendance)*

*INSET Day - Friday 24th October (no pupil attendance - disaggregated for staff)*

*OCCASIONAL Day – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November (no pupil or staff attendance)*

**SPRING TERM 2026**  
***(Monday 5th January to Friday 27th March 2026)***

**Half-Term:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February

**SUMMER TERM 2026**  
***(Monday 13th April to Tuesday 21st July 2026)***

**Half-Term:** Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May

*INSET Days – Wednesday 10th June (no pupil attendance)*

*Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st July (no pupil attendance - disaggregated for staff)*