

Batchwood Newsletter



Summer 2 24-25

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Headteacher's Letter

Dear Parent/Carer

We come to the end of another busy school year, and the end of my first full year as Headteacher it has gone by in a flash. I hope you have enjoyed reading your child's report and if you have any questions as always do not hesitate to get in touch.

End of term

- Term ends on Wednesday July 23rd 2025, at 13.15pm.

Uniform

I just wish to remind all parents/carers and students of the expectations of wearing full uniform. There are 6 students who have significant sensory issues, and it is only right that we make 'reasonable adjustments' for their needs. This has been agreed in advance. Other than these 6 students, everyone else needs to be in the correct uniform at the beginning of the new term and continue this throughout the whole academic year. The uniform requirements are below, and I have deliberately tried to make these as gender neutral as possible.

Uniform really does matter. Please support the school in dealing with the 'small things' so that the 'big things' do not arise.

Term Starts:

- Thursday 4th September for year 7 and 11
- Friday 5th September for all years.

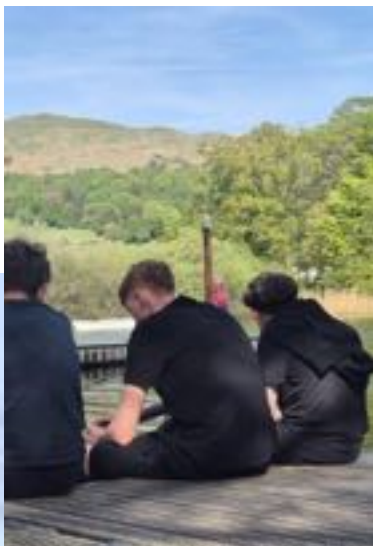
As you will see in the news, there has been so much going on throughout the term. It has been an incredibly busy and rewarding year, and our students have achieved so much – both academically and personally. From outstanding performances in exams and Batchfest to sporting successes and acts of kindness within our community, we are immensely proud of the effort, growth, and resilience shown by everyone. Thank you to our dedicated staff, supportive families, and, most importantly, our fantastic students for making this year so memorable. We wish you all a restful and joyful summer break – you've earned it!

Yours sincerely

Ross Whitaker
(Headteacher)



Brathay Residential



Year 9 Batchwood students were invited to Brathay, an outdoor residential site in the lake district. We were greeted with great weather for the 4 days we were there and took part in some incredible activities such as ghyll scrambling, whaler boating and canoeing across Lake Windermere. Students showed reliance throughout the trip and although many late nights were had, they were eager for each activity. Well done Brathay team for making us at Batchwood proud!





Math Trip to Bletchley Park

Our Mathematics Trip to Bletchley Park

Last week, students and staff embarked on an exciting educational trip to Bletchley Park, the historic site where secret codebreakers worked during World War II. This memorable visit gave us a unique insight into one of the most important locations in modern history.

Bletchley Park is famous for being the home of the British codebreakers who cracked the German Enigma and Lorenz ciphers. Their efforts were crucial in shortening the war and saving countless lives. As we toured the mansion and surrounding huts, we learned about the incredible teamwork, intelligence, and innovation that went into breaking enemy codes.

Students were fascinated by the exhibits, which included authentic wartime equipment, interactive displays, and the famous Bombe machine used to decode messages. In particular, Isaac Smith and Lilly Rose Wright were amazing at trying to solve the Enigma code, showing great enthusiasm and impressive problem-solving skills.

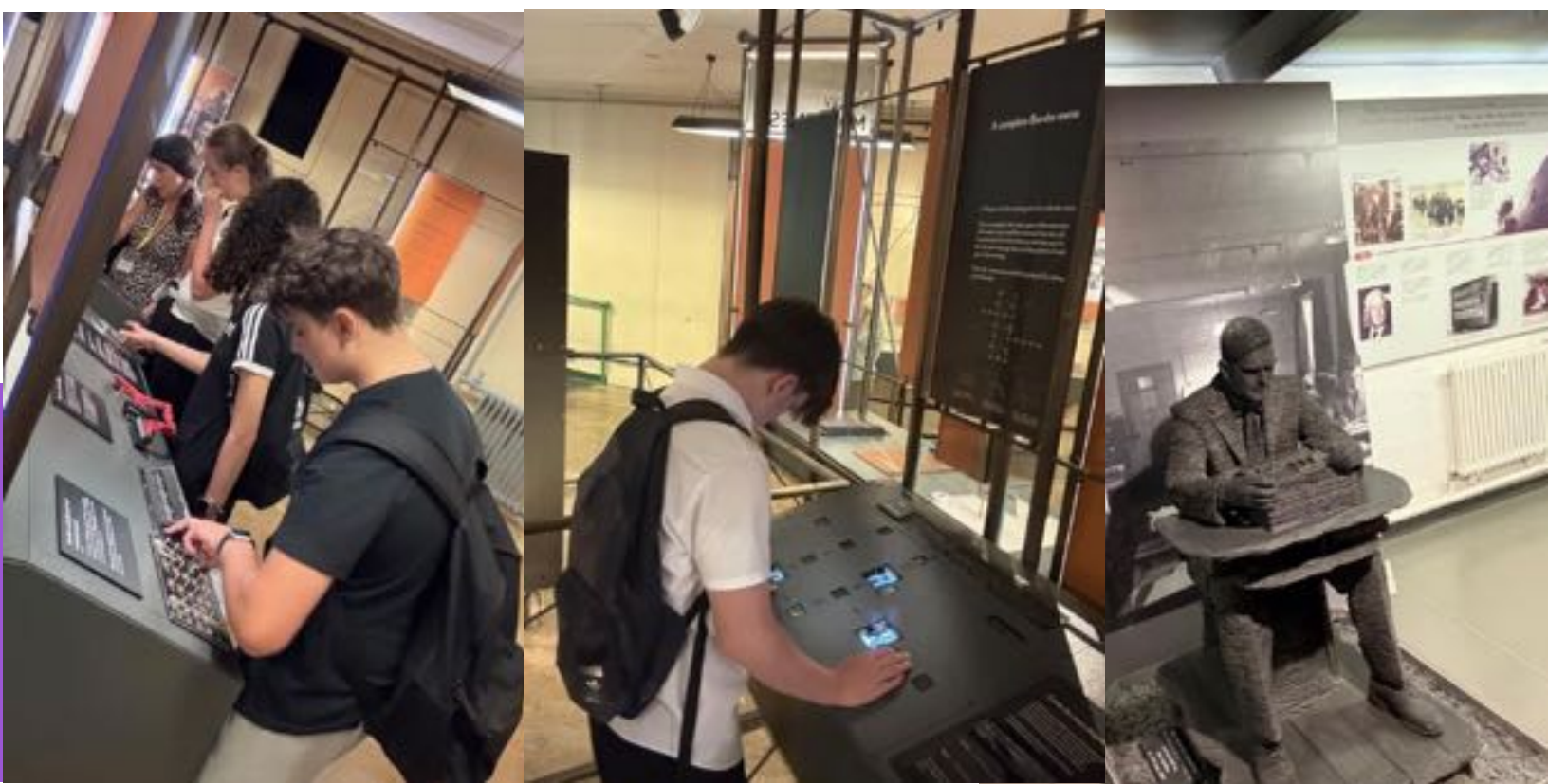
The guides shared gripping stories of the brilliant minds behind the operation, including Alan Turing, whose work laid the foundations of modern computing.

The trip was not only informative but inspiring, showing how perseverance and creativity can have a profound impact on the world. Many students remarked on how the experience brought history to life and sparked their interest in subjects like mathematics, computer science, and history.

We are grateful to all the staff who made this trip possible and to Bletchley Park for hosting us. It was a fantastic day filled with learning and discovery, and one that will be remembered for years to come.

Miss NA Malik

Director of Mathematics and Home Learning



Numbers in Action: Our Whole-School Kahoot Brings Maths to Life!

On 21st May 2025, our school came together to celebrate World Numeracy Day with an exciting and interactive Kahoot quiz that involved students and staff from all year groups! The event was designed to highlight the importance of numeracy skills in everyday life while having fun testing knowledge across a variety of math topics.

Participants answered questions ranging from basic arithmetic to interesting facts about numbers and problem-solving challenges. The quiz created a fantastic buzz around the school, encouraging friendly competition and teamwork. It was wonderful to see so many students engaged, demonstrating their confidence and enthusiasm for mathematics.

A special well done to 10C, who were the winners of the Kahoot, with Nurture 1 closely behind. Huge congratulations to them and to all students who took part and gave their best.

One Year 9 student shared, *"I loved how the Kahoot made maths fun and competitive—it really helped me think quickly!"* Meanwhile, a Year 11 student commented, *"It was great to see people from different years working together and showing how important maths is for everyday life."*

The Kahoot was not only a fun way to mark World Numeracy Day but also a reminder of how vital numeracy skills are across all subjects and real-world situations. We're proud of everyone who took part and look forward to more events that make learning maths both enjoyable and meaningful!

Don't miss out on our next fun and engaging maths event! Whether you're a numbers whiz or just curious, join us to explore the fascinating world of maths together. Keep an eye out for announcements and get ready to challenge yourself!

Miss NA Malik

Director of Mathematics and Home Learning

Uniform and School Staff

Uniform for September

Years 7-10

- Black shoes
- Black trousers or skirt
- White shirt
- Black blazer
- School tie

Year 11

- Can wear uniform as above or....
- A suit
- Smart office wear (shoes, trousers/skirt, shirt, jacket or cardigan)

Uniform really does matter. Please support the school in dealing with the 'small things' so that the 'big things' do not arise.

This year, like many others, we say goodbye to some members of staff. We wish Mrs Cragg, Scott Allen and Lara Marchant good luck in their next steps. They have all contributed to the successful running of the school and we will miss them.

With change brings opportunity and we look forward to welcoming some new staff to the Batchwood team in September:

- Mr R Eversley (Design Technology)
- Mrs C Bradley (Interventions teacher)
- Miss Olivia Scott
- Miss Josie Hann (teaching assistant)
- Miss Asher Robinson (teaching assistant)

Term-Time Holidays – Important Reminder

We have seen a significant increase in requests for term-time holidays this academic year. We would like to remind families that, in line with government guidelines and our school's attendance policy, term-time holidays can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. All requests for absences must be made in writing and in advance. Forms are available from the school office.

Please note that holidays, weddings, and visiting family are not considered exceptional circumstances. Where 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) are missed due to unauthorised holidays, families may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

We understand the financial pressures many families are currently facing, and we do not take these decisions lightly. However, regular attendance is essential for our pupils' academic progress, as well as their social and emotional development.

We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that your child attends school regularly and on time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the attendance officer or the school office.



Secret Meaning Behind Emojis

Wingman Mentors have put together a useful guide explaining the hidden or alternative meanings behind some of the emojis that are frequently used by young people today. As online culture evolves, so too does the way young people communicate—including the use of symbols and emojis that may seem innocent but can sometimes carry different, more subtle messages.

This infographic highlights emojis that could appear in messages or social media posts. While not every use of these emojis is cause for concern, it's important for parents and carers to be aware of how they might be used in certain contexts—especially when it comes to peer pressure, inappropriate content, or risky online behaviour.

Staying Safe on Social Media: Tips for Parents

- **Keep Communication Open**
Encourage regular, honest conversations with your child about how they use social media, who they talk to, and what platforms they're on.
- **Know the Platforms**
Familiarise yourself with the social media apps your child uses (such as Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, and Discord) and how privacy settings work on each one.
- **Talk About Digital Boundaries**
Discuss the importance of thinking before posting, sharing personal information, or accepting messages from people they don't know.
- **Promote Critical Thinking**
Help your child understand that not everything online is as it seems, and that it's okay to question content or step away from pressure to fit in.
- **Use Tools Where Appropriate**
Parental controls, screen time settings, and content filters can help support safer online experiences without replacing trust or communication.

This resource is designed to help you stay informed and confident in supporting your child's online wellbeing. For more advice, or to speak with someone about concerns, feel free to reach out to the school pastoral team.

Emojis and explanations are on the next page.

Emojis and Their Hidden Meanings



EMOJIS AND THEIR HIDDEN MEANINGS:

SIDE-EYE - DENOTES SENDING OR RECEIVING EXPLICIT IMAGES.

CHILI - INDICATES SEXUALLY SPICY IMAGERY OR MESSAGES.

FIRE - MEANS LIT, FIRE OR SEXY.

WOMAN DANCING - EXPRESSES THE DESIRE TO PARTY HARD.

TOILET REPRESENTS A WOMAN CRUSH.

FISHING POLE INDICATES FISHING FOR A COMPLIMENT.

THE DYNAMITE REPRESENTS THE EXPLODING RED PILL, I N OTHER WORDS, BREAKING OUT OF SOCIETAL NORMS AND MYTHS.

FACE WITH NO MOUTH EMOJI CAN CONVEY THE MESSAGE "DO NOT TELL ANYBODY". IT MAY BE USED BULLING OR SHARING RUMYPROPHETS, ILLEGAL OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION.

LINKED TO RAGE, IT "INAVOLUNTARILY COLONISES" OUR FANS, REPRESENTING AN EXTREMIST IDEAS ARE PREVALENT TO REPRESENT THOSE WHO SEE THE "REAL TRUTH" IN THE WORLD.

LEAF - REPRESENTS CANNABIS.

SKULL, ALIEN AND DEMON EMOJIS MAY REPRESENT THE DRUG ECSTASY.

NAIL POLISH - INDICATES NOT BEING BOTHERED ABOUT SOMETHING.

BASEBALL CAP - INDICATES A LIE OR SOMETHING NOT TRUE. NO CAP.

THE RED HEART USUALLY MEANS LOVE.

USED IN INCEL CULTURE TO REPRESENT THE OPPOSITE OF THE RED PILL. THOSE WHO ARE BLIND TO THE REAL TRUTH AND ADHERE TO MORE MAINSTREAM VIEWS ABOUT GENDER DYNAMICS.

SNOWFLAKE, **NOSE** OR **PETROL** INDICATES COCAINE.

PEACH, BURNING EMOJI, CHERRY CAN ALL BE USED TO REPRESENT BODY PARTS IN A SEXUAL CONTEXT.

WOMEN WITH BUNNY EARS-CODE FOR SEXUALLY ACTIVE.

KITCHEN KNIFE - INDICATES BEING IN A BAD MOOD OR WANTING TO CAUSE DESTRUCTION.

THE PURPLE HEART CAN BE USED TO CONVEY ATTRACTION OR SEXUAL DESIRE.

100 - CAN REFER TO THE THEORY THAT 80% OF WOMEN ARE ATTRACTED TO 20% OF MEN.

THE BALLOON EMOJI MAY BE USED TO REPRESENT NITROUS OXIDE.

THE SWEAT EMOJI MAY ALSO BE USED IN A SEXUAL CONTEXT.

WOMAN TIPPING HAND EXPRESSES EXASPERATION.

INDICATES PENT-UP SEXUAL FRUSTRATION.

THE YELLOW HEART MAY MEAN "I'M INTERESTED, ARE YOU INTERESTED?"

CRICKET - USED TO MOCK WOMEN AND IDENTIFY A MAN AS AN INCEL.

EIGHT BALL SIGN FOR A DRUG DEALER OR COCAINE.

SQUIRT GUN - EXPRESSES EXTREME FRUSTRATION OR STRESS.

AVOCADO - REPRESENTS BEING BASIC.

CAMERA EMOJIS CAN REPRESENT A REQUEST FOR NUDE/EXPLICIT IMAGES OR VIDEOS.

THE PINK HEART CAN MEAN "I'M INTERESTED BUT NOT IN SEX."

THE HORSE EMOJIS CAN BE USED TO REPRESENT THE DRUG KETAMINE.

THE PLUS CAN MEAN DRUG DEALER, ALSO KNOWN AS A PERSON'S "PLUS".

CANDY - REPRESENTS MDMA - ECSTASY.

CLAPPING HANDS - USED IN A PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE WAY TO EMPHASISE SOMETHING.

THE FROG CAN MEAN "YOU'RE UGLY". IT IS USED IN BULLYING & HARASSMENT.

AN ORANGE HEART IS MORE LIKELY TO BE PLATONIC, AND MEANS "YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE."

CHECK YOUR CHILDREN'S DEVICES.

WINGMANMENTORS.COM

FOR MORE INFORMATION
SCAN HERE



Careers Fair



**GENERATION
ST ALBANS DISTRICT**
MON 30TH JUNE 2025

*Are you a student aged 15-19?
Come and discover the amazing career
opportunities available in St Albans District*

EXHIBITORS INCLUDE

Logos for exhibitors: ROTHAMSTED RESEARCH, ROYAL AIR FORCE, TESCO, KIER, THE CROWN ESTATE, sky studios, and St Albans City & District Council.

More exhibitors to be confirmed on the registration webpage.

**FREE TO ATTEND: SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER
or VISIT - <https://rb.gy/zcthv>
ROTHAMSTED RESEARCH, HARPENDEN, AL5 2JQ
TIME: 3.30PM-5.00PM**

Logos for partners: ROTHAMSTED RESEARCH, Herts Enterprise, HERTS ENTERPRISE, H&P, FUTURE, and St Albans City & District Council.

The recent Generation St Albans event, hosted by the Careers and Enterprise Company, offered students a vital opportunity to explore local career paths and future education options. Students directly engaged with representatives from diverse sectors, including further education and apprenticeship providers like Oaklands College, public services such as Herts Police and the RAF, and large local employers including Tesco and Royal Mail. This direct interaction helped students understand available jobs and apprenticeships, learn about

application processes, and identify essential skills needed for various roles, empowering them with actionable advice for their next steps after school.

This engaging event allowed students to ask questions directly, participate in discussions, and hear inspiring stories from professionals, broadening their awareness of the St Albans career landscape. It demystified professions and boosted their confidence in discussing their future, providing a crucial link between academic learning and real-world employment. We encourage you to discuss their experiences from this valuable event with your child, supporting their career exploration journey. If your son/daughter was unable to attend and would like information on careers advice, please let me know via email at: **mpearson@batchwood.herts.sch.uk**

First Aid Workshop

As part of our *Alternative Learning* on 3rd July, students took part in a valuable and engaging first aid workshop delivered by the **British Red Cross**. The session aimed to equip young people with the knowledge and confidence to respond effectively in emergency situations—skills that could one day help save a life.

Throughout the session, students learned how to:

- Recognise and respond to common medical emergencies
- Administer first aid using everyday household items (e.g. using a clean cloth for bleeding, or cling film for a burn)
- Perform **CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)** confidently on adults
- Understand when and how to use a **defibrillator (AED)** safely and effectively

The workshop was hands-on and interactive, giving students practical experience and helping them to feel more empowered in the face of unexpected situations. Many commented afterwards on how useful and reassuring the session was.

This is part of our ongoing commitment to ensure students are not only developing academically, but also gaining essential life skills and real-world knowledge. We'd like to thank the British Red Cross for their time, expertise, and for delivering such an impactful session.



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Mental Health & Wellbeing

As part of our ongoing commitment to grow and develop mental health and wellbeing in the school we have developed the 'Wellbeing Ambassadors'.

Wellbeing ambassadors are students who support and promote the mental health and wellbeing of their peers. Their aim is to help create a positive, empathetic and inclusive environment that allows students' wellbeing to thrive. In doing so, our hope is that students learn to become kind and compassionate young people who can think about their own needs as well as their peers and the wider community.

Aims & agenda of Wellbeing Ambassadors:

- Wellbeing Ambassadors meet half termly with a member of the wellbeing team to discuss the focus for the half term.
- They engage in a range of different focuses such as:
 - *Developing the "The five ways to wellbeing" - Connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give (please see above)*
 - *Supporting environmental issues*
 - *Creating a time capsule and burying on school grounds*
 - *Creating a buddy system to support the mental health and wellbeing of their peers*
- They have also organised charity events that raised money to support organisations like YoungMinds'.
- Anti-bullying has also been a key focus in our school and recently the wellbeing ambassadors had anti-bullying training to support students across the school.
- The purpose of the wellbeing ambassadors is to help reduce stigma surrounding mental health and encourage help-seeking behaviours.
- They act as role models, fostering a sense of belonging and connection.

We are super proud of all that they are doing and we are excited to see what comes next! Any ideas, please feel free to reach out and send me an email.



MHST, Counsellors and the Wellbeing team

- The **NHS Mental Health Support Team (MHST)** continue to support our students with a range of presenting issues such as behaviours that challenge, anxiety and low mood.
- We have **two wonderful counsellors** and currently one member of the **wellbeing support team** to support our young people with a range of mental health and wellbeing issues, so please get in touch if you think your child would like some mental health support at Batchwood. We are always here to support and listen!

Mental Health & wellbeing staff training

Staff training is an integral part of our school and we strive to continue to learn more about a variety issues relating to mental health and wellbeing that support our young people. A critical area we recently trained in was **self-harm**. One of our amazing staff delivered this really important training to our whole staff and we will continue to embed all new learning into our everyday relationships with our students. If you have any concerns relating to your child and self-harm, please don't hesitate to reach out and contact us.

Help with Mental Health & Wellbeing

- If you need help with your mental health, or support with caring for someone else, you can find advice on the Mind, Rethink or Mental Health Foundation websites, or on the NHS website.
- For 24-hour support you can also call the **Samaritans** on **116 123** or text **SHOUT** to **85258**.

If you are worried that you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 999 – you can ask to stay on the line while you wait for help to arrive.

If there is anything you would like to see or hear about in the Batchwood Newsletter regarding Mental Health and wellbeing, please do let me know, I would love to hear from you!

If you would like support and/or you feel like your child needs more support, again please don't hesitate to contact me.

Miss Maxen
Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead
cmaxen@batchwood.herts.sch.uk



Important Diary Dates



July 2025

9 th -	Year 6 transition evening
10 th -	Year 6 transition day
21 st -	London Zoo whole school trip
22 nd -	Batchfest
23 rd -	End of term (1.15pm)



September 2025

3 rd -	Inset (school closed)
4 th -	Autumn 1 begins - Year 7 and 11 in only
5 th -	Whole school in



October 2025

23 rd -	Year 7 tea party
27 th -	Half term starts



November 2025

9 th -	Inset (school closed)
4 th -	Inset (school closed)
5 th -	Inset (school closed)
6 th -	Inset (school closed)
7 th -	Occasional Day (school closed)
10 th -	Autumn 2 begins