

Batchwood Newsletter



Autumn 1 24-25

Headteacher's Letter

As we come to the close of another busy term, we would like to take a moment to congratulate all of our students for their continued hard work, determination, and resilience. The progress each of you has made, both academically and personally, is a testament to your dedication and will be seen in the reports when they come out in the New Year. Whether it's achieving personal goals, overcoming challenges, or actively participating in school life, you should all be incredibly proud of the strides you've made. You will see a lot of evidence of this over the next few pages. Keep up the fantastic work, as every step forward is a step toward greater success.

The close of the year also brings some changes, we will be running a revised timetable which you will all have received this was due to some staff changes that have occurred. This term has seen the appointment of two new Teaching assistants Paige and Erin, who have made a great start.

At the end of term we are sadly saying good bye to some staff - Gemma Benbow, Tony Pau and Lorraine Ambler, I would like to thank them for all their hard work and wish them well in their next adventures. Staff leaving means new staff join and we welcome Eleanor Scanlon and Kristian Clarke in January who I am sure will be fantastic additions to the Batchwood staff team.

As we look forward to the new year, we wish everyone a restful break filled with joy, relaxation and good times. May you return in January feeling refreshed and ready to embrace the opportunities ahead. We are excited for the growth and achievements to come in the next term. Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and productive New Year. Let's continue to support one another and make 2025 another year of great accomplishments!

Ross Whitaker

In this edition:

Attendance Matters

Student Achievement

Student Work Gallery

Forest School Deer Sightings

Bake Sale

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Important Diary Dates



Attendance Matters

**Congratulations to our most improved attendance students: Kara C Y10
Dantae C-P Y8**



They have made incredible strides in improving their attendance between last Summer term and this Autumn term. Their hard work and consistency set a great example for others to follow. Keep up the excellent work.

We understand that sometimes our students may face challenges that make regular school attendance difficult. They might have poor sleep patterns or heightened anxiety. They could be worrying about an upcoming test or a Repair with a teacher. Maybe they have friendship issues that have spilled over from the day before or from an online exchange.

We want you to know that we are here to help. If your child is experiencing any difficulties that are affecting their ability to attend school, please reach out to their form tutor, the attendance lead, or a member of our pastoral team. We're committed to resolving these issues before they become larger barriers to attendance and learning.

Regular school attendance helps prepare young people for adulthood and is key to supporting positive outcomes – not only academic achievement, but good school attendance also contributes to better long-term economic and social opportunities, as well as improved mental health and well-being.

Let's work together to ensure every student has the support they need to succeed.

**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

Student Achievements



Business Studies

Arlo B in year 11 achieved a **grade 9** in his Business Studies Mock papers. Arlo has shown a flair in Business Studies and has put a huge effort into his lesson work, home learning and revision. You can see the impact of his attitude to his learning both inside and out of school. Well done Arlo for this incredible feat, it is very much deserved!

Sports

Well done to year 7 completed their Unit Award Scheme Certification in Basic Ball End Skills.

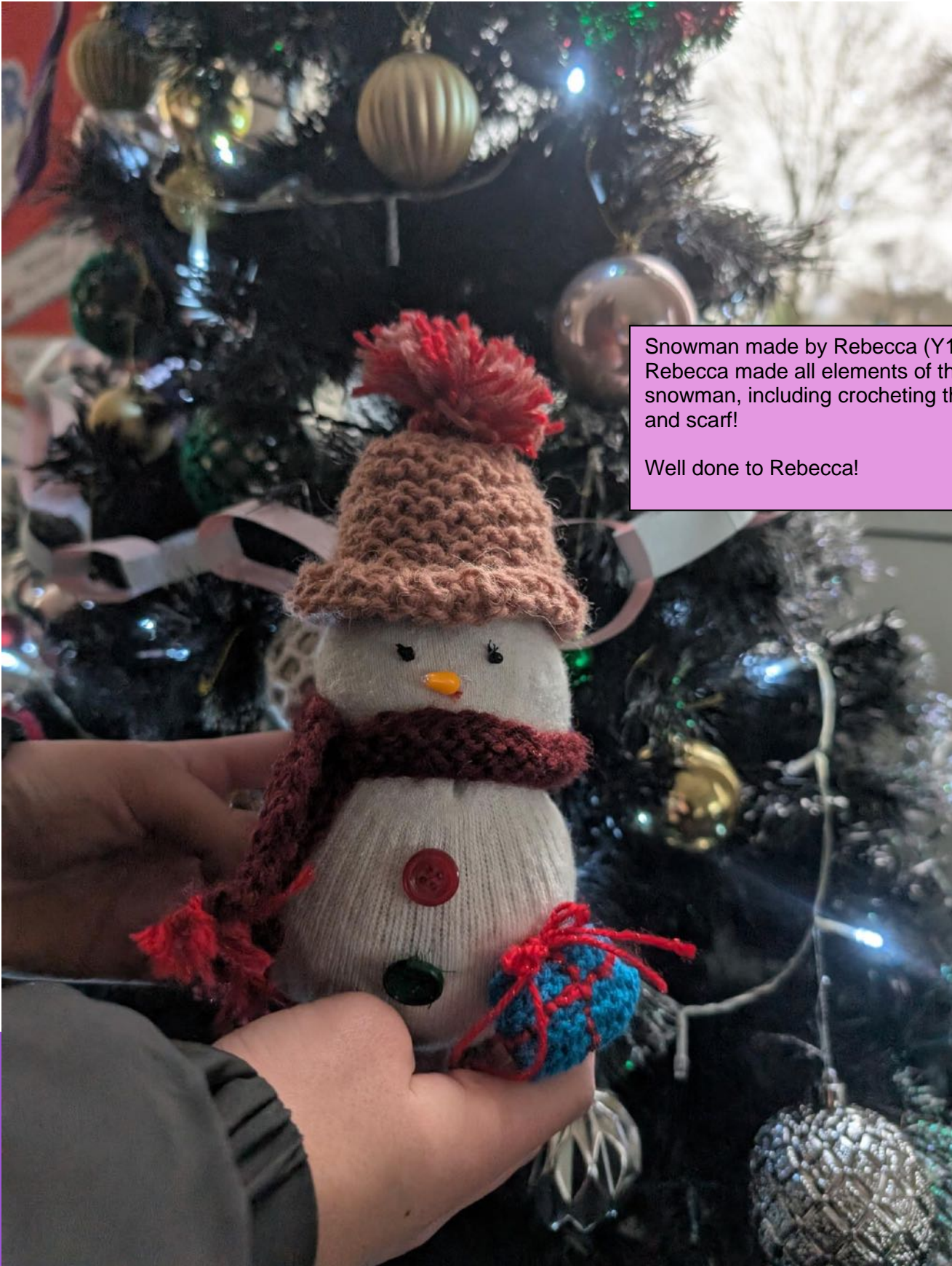
The girl's netball team played a game against Townsend school, and won 2-1! Everyone played an amazing game and worked so hard for each other. After half term there will be more games.

The girl's basketball game against St Luke's, was a great game and the girls won 23-3. The first girls basketball in a couple of years, and the girls were a credit to the school.

We also had a boys basketball game of mixed year groups. All the students worked well together as a team and the boys in the upper years supported those in the younger years.



Student Work Gallery



Snowman made by Rebecca (Y10).
Rebecca made all elements of the
snowman, including crocheting the hat
and scarf!

Well done to Rebecca!



Above are some pictures of the bricklaying skills Austin (Y10) has been learning at his alternative provision. Austin has been really enjoying his course and as you can see from the work he has done, has really excelled! Well done to Austin!

Bushcraft and Forest School Deer Sightings

Graham took students to visit the Deer during the Rut, at Knebworth during their Bushcraft and Forest school lessons. The students were able to see Britain's largest land mammal the Red Deer.



School bake sale 19th December

THURSDAY 19TH DECEMBER

Christmas Bake Sale

Variety of cakes, brownies and hot chocolate cones
for sale!

Prices from 50p. All proceeds raised go to the
school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

YOUNGMINDS

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing

Mental Health & Wellbeing

This term we supported the charity *YoungMinds* and managed to raise **£70.00** for young people struggling with their mental health. We are super proud of all the students who contributed a pound to this wonderful charity! Well done all!

Please visit the website below to see what they do and how they can help our young people.
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

We feel it's important to teach our students to understand about mental health and how it can impact our own and others' lives. We try to model and demonstrate to our students how to create positive mental health as well as what to do if they are suffering with poor mental health. We offer support, strategies and signposting where needed.

We also feel it's important to nurture kindness and embed an empathetic way of being so our students are able to think about how they can support others who may be struggling with mental health.

With this in mind we will be asking staff and our students to bring a pound in again for Christmas jumper day on **Thursday 19th December**. So we can give this money to *Children in Need*, another wonderful charity that supports the wellbeing of students across the country.

Please see website below for more information.

<https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/>

Thank you so much for your support!

Miss Maxen
Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead



Parent Workshops being delivered by the Mental Health Support Team

- *Sleep* 20th January 2025 4pm to 5pm (delivered by Katherine and Katie (Positive Behaviour Analyst)
- *Self-harm* 17th March 2025 4pm to 5pm (delivered by Katherine and Nikki)
- *Behaviours that Challenge* - 12th May 2025 4pm to 5pm (delivered by Katherine and Katie (Positive Behaviour Analyst)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

If there are any workshops you feel would be helpful for you or your children, please let me know and I would be happy to discuss this with you. There will also be more workshops delivered to the students by our MHST so please watch this space!

What can I do help myself this Christmas?

Whilst Christmas is typically seen as a time of celebration and joy, the reality is that many people experience a range of emotions, from stress and anxiety to loneliness. It can be tough to admit, especially when it's supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year.

Whether you're worried about the mental health of someone close to you or feeling the strain on your own wellbeing due to societal expectations and upcoming big expenses, it's okay not to be okay during this season. There are simple things you can do to take care of your mental health when you're feeling low.

There are multiple ways you can support your mental health this festive season. Here are a few things you might want to consider:

- Stay active

Physical activity is linked to improved mental health. Incorporate exercise into your routine, whether it's a winter walk, home workout or participating in holiday-themed fitness and dance classes.

- Try something new and create memories

The cold weather can limit new things to try outside the home, so try to plan some indoor activities. Try a jigsaw or board game from a charity shop, make a list of Christmas films you haven't seen or try a Christmas crafting activity. Consider swapping recipes with your friend or organising a food exchange night to try new things and create new memories.

- Control your spending

We sometimes feel pressure to participate in expensive social activities or spend more on presents out of fear we have yet to get our loved ones 'enough'. Buying presents isn't the only way to show that we care, but overspending can impact your mental health and budgeting in the long term.

- Not comparing yourself to others

While it is nice to see everyone celebrating, it can also create feelings of comparison when we only see happy images. You might compare your family dynamics, romantic relationships, or the number of presents other people have under their Christmas tree. Everyone's life looks different, and when we compare, it can create a negative spiral that impacts our mental health. If we recognise its happening, we can challenge some of those negative thoughts and practice gratitude for the things we do have.

- Setting boundaries and realistic expectations

It's important to set boundaries. Don't feel pressure to spend your Christmas with people who negatively impact your mental health. Some people have complicated relationships with people who don't understand or respect their lifestyle choices.

Allow yourself to embrace imperfections and focus on creating meaningful moments rather than striving for perfection.

- **Giving back to others**

There are many ways we can give back at Christmas, whether helping out someone we care about or volunteering with a charity. If you are looking to volunteer, you could contact your local food bank or visit [Crisis and The Salvation Army](#) which offer roles at Christmas.

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support Helplines

Samaritans (116 123) is a 24-hour anonymous service available every day of the year. If you prefer not to speak on the phone, you can email Samaritans at jo@samaritans.org.

CALM: National helpline across the UK for men to talk about any troubles they are feeling. Call **0800 58 58 58**. They are available 5pm to midnight, 365 days a year.

If you are experiencing a crisis such as suicidal thoughts, abuse or assault, self-harm, bullying, or relationship challenges, you can text **Shout on 85258** who can provide support.

NHS 24 by dialling 111 if you feel you need to speak with a medical professional or call **999** in an emergency.

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Important Diary Dates

December 2024

- 18th - Panto whole school trip
- 19th- Christmas Dinner
- 19th- Reports out to parents/carers
- 20th- Christmas Show
- 20th- End of Term (early finish)

January 2025

- 6th- Term starts (all years)
- 14th- Options evening 6pm start
- 14th- Parents evening 6.30pm (Y9 and 11)

February 2025

- 17th- Half term week
- 24th- Term starts (all years)

February 2025

- 4th- Final day of spring term
- 22nd- Term starts (all years)