



## *Margaret Chapman, Executive Head Teacher*

It was wonderful to welcome so many families to our Sixth Form Open Evening this week. We welcomed prospective new students from the local area and beyond and continue Open Morning visits for all families to tour the Sixth Form, meet our students and attend lessons. The quality of subject teaching and leadership across all curriculum areas is so sharply demonstrated in the continued high standards of achievement with over 90% of students successfully applying to university courses, including Oxbridge and Russell Group admissions. We are also promoting and seeing great success with students applying for a great range of Apprenticeships. Regardless of future aspirations, we can guarantee a superb Sixth Form experience for all, which was so well demonstrated by our superb Sixth Form ambassadors.

Additionally, at this time of the year, as with most businesses, we have undertaken a full audit. We have received a 'clean bill of health' and with no management advice notes, congratulations to the Finance Team and all who support budget management in ensuring excellent financial probity across our school.

Individual Year 9 Progression Meetings continue with the focus on GCSE options led by all members of the Senior Leadership Team. This is a great opportunity to talk to our students about how they are feeling about school, support and next steps. Please do continue the active conversations at home about careers to open horizons. Many students do not fully understand what careers and employment opportunities are undertaken by members of their own family. If you have any questions about the options process, please contact [Mr Tansley](#) or [Mr Markou](#).

An enormous thank you to all members of the PTA who gave up their time so freely to support and lead the 'pre-loved' uniform sale last Saturday. Over £1,200 was raised which is a fabulous achievement and enables target small projects to be considered across the schools.

We now focus on the Winter Fair which is on Sunday 8 December. House Captains are leading assemblies to each of the Houses to encourage active involvement from all.

Please help us by:

- Donating items for the tombola
- Purchasing Grand Draw Tickets through School Gateway
- Coming along on Sunday 8 December and supporting the wide array of stalls at the Fair, led by students

Thank you so much in anticipation of your support. More information can be found on pages 6 and 7.

Congratulations to Cherry and Elaha in Year 10, who, accompanied by Mrs Draper, took part in the Rotary Young Chef Competition this week. Cherry's apple tart had a special mention from the judge!

It's that time of year again - the Year 12 Young Enterprise Team will be launching their first venture at the Harpenden Christmas Carnival this Sunday between 12 noon - 6pm. They have been busy creating a range of products to get you into the festive spirit! So if you are free this Sunday please come along and support our students!

On Thursday and Friday lunchtimes this week, we welcomed Guide Dogs UK, whom we support every year. I am always amazed at the patience of the guide dogs, surrounded by hundreds of our students, under the watchful eyes of the team! (See picture on front page)

We are looking forward to our annual student Carol Service on Friday 13 December, please see page 4 for important information regarding logistics for the day and bus arrangements.

We have been asked to share the [attached letter](#) from Public Health in relation to World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, 18-24 November 2024. The letter explains what antimicrobial resistance is and what families can do to ensure that antibiotics are not used unnecessarily. The document has some links to resources which may be useful for families.

Diarrhoea and Vomiting: please remember that if your child has been vomiting and/or had diarrhoea, we have a 48 hour policy, which means that they should stay off school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days. This should prevent the spread of any disease within the school community. Please see the NHS guidelines attached [here](#).

Click [here](#) to sign into the National Online Safety site to view '10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators Educating Children on Spending and Saving' or [here to view the PDF](#).

Finally, we have just received an update from the examination boards in relation to the summer examination series and share for your reference and information below. In addition, all schools have been instructed to retain all GCSE and A Level mock examination papers for reference.

### **Information to families where students are taking GCSE and A level examinations in summer 2025**

#### **Exam dates**

GCSE, AS and A level exams will be held between 8 May and 24 June 2025. You must be available for the whole of the exam period. Exam board timetables for the 2025 summer exam series of GCSEs, AS and A levels are available on the [Joint Council for Qualifications website](#).

The exam timetable contains two contingency sessions on the afternoon of 11 June and all day on 25 June 2025. You must be available at these times. These sessions would be used in the unlikely event that an exam had to be moved nationally because it could not take place when planned. These sessions cannot be used to reschedule an exam that you have missed. If an exam has to be moved to one of these sessions, your school or college will tell you.

## What is the difference between a Foundation and Higher paper?

Some GCSE subjects have 2 tiers of entry - Foundation and Higher. The subjects with tiers of entry are:

- Maths
- Combined Science
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Statistics
- Modern Foreign Languages

The school decides whether to enter students for Foundation or Higher tier based on extensive knowledge of each young person on an individual basis.

**Foundation tier:** students may be awarded grades 5 to 1 (5-5 to 1-1 in Combined Science).

**Higher tier:** students may be awarded grades 9 to 4 (9-9 to 4-4 in Combined Science). Students who just miss a grade 4 (4-4 for Combined Science) may be awarded a grade 3 (4-3 for Combined Science).

If a student does not get enough marks to get a grade, a 'U' will be awarded.

Before sitting any exams students should make sure of their tier of entry to ensure effective preparation for, and take, the correct exam paper.

## Support materials for GCSE Mathematics, Physics and Combined Science

The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that students taking exams in 2025, 2026 and 2027 will not be expected to memorise all the usual formulae and equations for GCSE Mathematics, Physics and Combined Science. Students will be provided with support materials in the form of formulae and equation sheets for GCSE Mathematics, Physics and Combined Science exams in 2025, 2026 and 2027. The support materials will set out the formulae and equations that students must memorise in a normal year, as set out in the DfE's subject content. Exam boards will publish the formulae and equation sheets for the exams in 2025 in December 2024 so that students may become familiar with them before the exams. These sheets will also be included with the exam papers. The formulae and equation sheets to be used in the 2025 exams will be the same as those used for exams in 2024.

## What is an access arrangement?

Access arrangements is a term often used by awarding organisations, schools and colleges to describe arrangements that help students to access an assessment, without changing the demands of the assessment.

There are two categories of access arrangements:

1. **Reasonable Adjustments:** changes made to an assessment or to the way an assessment is carried out that reduce or remove a disadvantage caused by a student's disability.
2. **Special Consideration:** changes made to an assessment or to the way an assessment is carried out when a student has experienced a temporary illness or injury (such as, needing a scribe for a broken arm), or some other event outside of the student's control at the time of the assessment.

If you have any queries, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance or SENCO in relation to access arrangements.

With all good wishes and a reminder that Friday 29 November is an Occasional Day and school will be closed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. C. C. C.', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.



## CAROL SERVICE - FRIDAY 13 DECEMBER 2024



### INFORMATION AND BUS ARRANGEMENTS

**Friday 13 December** is the date of our annual Carol Service in the Abbey. The Carol Service will take place in the afternoon and will finish no later than 3:10pm. **All students will be dismissed from the Abbey after the service.**

Students are required to follow their usual uniform or Sixth Form dress code for this event and are reminded that no bags, no matter what size may be brought to school on Friday 13 December. Students will not be set home learning on this day nor will it be due on this day and teachers will plan for students not having resources and bags.

•Uniform should be correct and tidy, including coats. Any colour coat or scarf is acceptable but **hoodies, even under coats, are absolutely not allowed. Students will be asked to remove these before departure.**

•Students may bring their phone with them, but it must be switched off so that it does not affect the sound system in the Abbey. They should not use it during the walk to the Abbey to ensure safety and are not allowed to use it in the Abbey.

Unfortunately, owing to a lack of space we are unable to invite parents/carers to the service.

#### SCHOOL BUSES

Many students come to school on school buses and arrangements have been made for these buses as follows:

Students who catch any of the buses listed below are reminded that they should make their way **quickly** to Westminster Lodge after the service and should aim to arrive by 3:20pm to enable buses to leave on time. The buses have timetables to adhere to and cannot wait for latecomers.

- **Greenwood Buses - Shenley/Radlett/Borehamwood**
- **E446 - Wheathampstead/Kimpton**
- **84 - Sullivans**

#### STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS

The Carol Service is an important school occasion and all students are expected to attend. However, we do appreciate that there are families who would prefer their child not to attend for religious reasons.

**We require notification from parents/carers if the family wishes their child to be excused. If you wish for your child to be excused on religious grounds, please complete this [Google Form](#) by the end of today - Friday 22 November.**

For students who are excused from attending the Abbey Service, we have an afternoon of diverse community activities at school. Students will be dismissed from school at the usual time of 3:10pm.

**Please note that students remaining at school will need to organise their own transport home as there will be no access to school buses from STAGS on Friday 13 December.**



# Diary Dates

## Sunday 24 November

Year 12 Young Enterprise Harpenden  
Christmas Carnival

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## Wednesday 27 November

Online Safety Parent Workshop, 6-7pm

[Click here to access the workshop](#)

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## Thursday 28 November

STAGS Dance Company Performance, 3-7pm

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## Friday 29 November

Occasional Day - School Closed for Students

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## Tuesday 3 December

Oxbridge Information Evening, 6-7pm, School Hall

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## Thursday 5 December

Winter Concert, 7pm, School Hall

## Sunday 8 December

Winter Fair, 12-3pm, School Hall

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## Monday 9 December

Year 7 Interhouse Sports

Year 11 Futures Day

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## Tuesday 10 December

Year 8 Interhouse Sports

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## Wednesday 11 December

Year 9 Interhouse Sports

SEND Parent Support Group, 6.30-8pm, Library

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## Thursday 12 December

Year 10 Interhouse Sports

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## Friday 13 December

Carol Service, St Albans Abbey

Diversity Event

For an overview of our PSHE curriculum, please click [here](#)

SUPPORT TRUST AMBITION GENEROSITY SUCCESS



# PTA NEWS

Welcome to the PTA News section, where you'll get weekly PTA news and updates.

## Diary Dates

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec** – deadline for Winter Fair Tombola Donations

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec** – deadline to buy Grand Draw Tickets on School Gateway (you can still buy them at the Winter Fair itself)

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Dec** – 12-3pm STAGS Winter Fair. Please come to the Fair and support your student, the School and the PTA!

## News

The Pre-loved Uniform Sale last Saturday raised over £1,200. A huge thank you for all the donations, and especially to the volunteers who sorted them all.

Last quarter, our online “Easyfundraising” shoppers raised over £250 simply by shopping as normal, and enabling an Easyfundraising donation from the retailer to STAGS PTA. Please remember to use Easyfundraising when you are shopping online, especially during the festive season! To create an Easyfundraising account, [please click here](#).

## How you can help

The biggest way you can help us this term is to come to the Winter Fair! Please support our Tombolas, enjoy refreshments at the Festive Café, browse our wonderful craft stalls for all your Christmas gift needs, and support your student in their House Games stall!

Could you become a School Fund donor? [Make a Gift Aid Declaration here](#) and set up a monthly payment to STAGS PTA via your online/mobile banking.

Sign up for My School Lottery – play from £1 a week to support STAGS PTA and be in with a chance of winning! [Sign up here](#).

***Thank you in advance for your help!***



# PTA NEWS

## STAGS WINTER FAIR: SUNDAY 8th DECEMBER 12-3pm

We have lots of fabulous prizes waiting to be won in the PTA Grand Draw. To be in with a chance of winning, please purchase your Winter Fair Grand Draw tickets via School Gateway! Prizes include – Hampers, Beauty products, dental care vouchers, Laser Quest and Snow Centre vouchers, beautiful art, craft and gift items, and more!

**Sunday 8 December 12-3pm**  
**STAGS WINTER FAIR**  
**The PTA Grand Draw**

Please buy your tickets via School Gateway until  
**Thursday 5th Dec**  
or at the Winter Fair from the PTA Stall

Dental, Hair & Beauty!    Snow centre & Laser-quest!    Hampers & Meals out!    and much more!

**northwood**

Thankyou to our Headline Sponsor  
Northwood St Albans Estate Agents





# Notices







# Notices

**UNIFORM4KIDS**

**BLACK**

**FRIDAY**

**FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER**  
**ONLINE ONLY**  
**VALID FOR 24 HOURS**  
**HOME DELIVERY ONLY**

**20% Off**

**USE CODE**  
**BLACKFRIDAY20**  
**AT CHECKOUT**

Ts & Cs APPLY A DISCOUNT CANNOT BE ADDED RETROSPECTIVELY TO AN ORDER ALREADY PLACED

The offer is valid for one day only, online, and exclusively on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024**.  
The 20% discount applies to all products including schoolwear, sportswear, footwear and accessories.  
This offer is available **online only** via [www.uniform4kids.com](http://www.uniform4kids.com).

Discount code **BLACKFRIDAY20** must be entered at checkout. A discount cannot be added retrospectively to an order already placed.

There will be no Click & Collect or Delivery to School during this event. Orders will be dispatched via courier. Orders may take up to **one week** to process.



# Notices

## WINTER CONCERT

Featuring a range of performances from our musical ensembles, as well as small group acts from across the year groups

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Thursday 5 December

Tickets go on sale Monday 18 November via School Gateway,  
Adults £6, Concessions £4

