



# Bishop Stopford School

Week Ending: 12 December 2025

**NEWSLETTER**



**Poetry Together**

**Monday 15 December**  
Christmas Hampers

**Tuesday 16 December**  
Celebration of Achievement 6pm  
Year 8 House Games

**Wednesday 17 December**  
Year 10 House Games

**Thursday 18 December**  
Celebration Assemblies for  
Years 7,8,12,13  
Christian Union Event 12.15pm

**Friday 19 December**  
Celebration Assemblies for  
Years 9,10,11

School closes at 12.30pm  
*More details on page 4.*

**Next week:**  
*Week B*

**Assembly Theme:**  
Celebration Assemblies

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

*#BestOfBishop*

A recent survey from the Department for Education has revealed that more children than ever feel that they have someone in school who cares about them. This is great news! A strong sense of belonging is critical in increasing motivation, attendance and attainment.

It's important for all of us to be able to identify how we feel. Often, young people lack the language to describe those feelings. Developing emotional literacy is crucial to allow students to find words for the things they feel. For many young people, they feel that they are the only person struggling, so talking things through with a friend, a student mentor or a trusted adult can reveal just the opposite. At any given time, many students will be struggling with feelings of low mood, challenges with motivation, exam stress or anxiety. And all of these are typical of adolescence.

It's important we engage in activities which 'fill our tank' - a helpful analogy when talking with students about their wellbeing. We all have a tank which needs to be filled with things to give us energy. As our fuel is being used by engaging in routine, or difficult activities, we need to fill up with activities which provide joy, hope and energy. This could be time with friends, a hobby, listening to music, spending time in nature or myriad other things.

In school, we talk openly about wellbeing to enable students to create healthy life choices to support both their physical and emotional health. When challenges go beyond what may be typical of their age or stage, students can be referred to specialists, including the Mental Health Support Team, YouthWorks or Souster Youth. All these services provide short term intervention to support them to find and sustain balance in their own life, empowering them to build resilience for the long term.

**Mrs Smith**





## Safe Space – Financial Support at Christmas

As we look ahead to the Christmas break, there is much excitement. For many, it's an opportunity to unwind, share time together and celebrate with friends and family.

It's also a time when comparisons become starker. Many families are facing very difficult times, with the rise in the cost of living, a cold winter and food and housing instability. As a school, we make contributions locally through our Christmas Hamper competition. Each form has the opportunity to design, make and decorate a hamper which is filled with non-perishable food items. After the judging, the items are given to our local food bank and other charities, and distributed to families to enrich their Christmas experience.

While all students are invited to bring in an item to add to their hamper, this shouldn't feel like pressure. Students can contribute in other ways, including giving their time to making the hamper for their form.

There are a number of different charities offering support at Christmas. They have a specific focus on ensuring children receive a gift on Christmas Day. Debt charity Money Wellness offers a comprehensive list on their website: [Where to get free \(or nearly-free\) presents for kids this Christmas](#)

In addition, Action for Children's parent resources share ideas about Christmas on a budget, with a wide range of free or inexpensive activity ideas for the festive season. These can be found on their website here: [Ideas for celebrating Christmas with your family on a budget](#)

If you think that your child might be eligible for Free School Meals, email our Pupil Premium Co-ordinator: [pnorwood@bishopstopford.com](mailto:pnorwood@bishopstopford.com). If you have any other concerns about your child, please email their tutor or Head of Year.

**Mrs Smith**

## Poetry Together: Celebration in Words and Music



On Wednesday, we were thrilled to welcome older guests from our local community to our school for Poetry Together and cake (see front page), a heartwarming event uniting voices across generations. This year's theme was *Celebration*. Our students and their guests shared a wonderful selection of poems that they had personally written, capturing moments of joy, gratitude, and hope.

The afternoon was filled with laughter, reflection, and connection as students and guests recited their poetry. The event concluded on a truly memorable note with a song written and performed by George Robson (Year 13) showcasing the incredible talent we have within our school.

Alongside the poetry, guests enjoyed delicious cakes and refreshments, making the occasion not only a feast for the mind but also for the senses! It was a great example of how creativity can bring different generations together, fostering friendships and shared experiences.

Huge thanks to everyone who participated and supported this event. Poetry Together reminds us that words have the power to unite, inspire, and celebrate life.



**Mrs Fletton**

## End of term Closure and School Transport

**Friday 19th December** - non-uniform day with Christmas jumpers the theme. We are asking for a voluntary donation of £1 with proceeds going to Save the Children.

School closes at lunchtime. Students will be dismissed at the following times:

- Year 12 and 13: 12.20pm
- Year 8 and 10: 12.25pm
- Year 7, 9 and 11: 12.30pm

At 12.15pm, all students will go to the lesson they usually have for Period 4. They will register and then be dismissed in line with the times above.

RB Travel buses will collect students at 1pm from the usual venue near the Mikado Pheasant.

School will re-open to students on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Miss Curchin**

## Year 9 Options

Making curriculum choices in Year 9 is a very important part of a student's time in school. It is an opportunity for them to take control of their education and to shape the way they want their future to be. The options chosen for Years 10 and 11 will affect how time is spent at school for the next two years and may also influence what route is followed beyond Year 11.

Year 9 students have been carefully briefed this week about the Options process for 2025-26. They have also been issued with both an Options Booklet and a copy of this is also available in the Curriculum section of the school website alongside a short video for parents explaining the Options process.

### [Bishop Stopford School - Year 9 Options](#)

When choosing their options students need to be clear about why they are making the decisions.

Good reasons for choosing an option include:

- You will enjoy the course
- It fits your career ideas and plans
- It goes well with your other choices
- It helps to give you plenty of choice post 16
- You think you might want to continue studying it post 16
- Your research shows that it will interest you and motivate you to learn.

Bad reasons for choosing an option include:

- Your friends have chosen it
- You think it's a good option for a boy/girl
- Someone else thinks it is a good idea
- You like the teacher you have now
- You did not have time to research your options properly

The Options Choices Form is available online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com>

We strongly recommend that the Options form is *not* completed until after students have received their next report (issued on 9th January 2026) and attended the Year 9 Progress Review and Options Event. No priority is given to forms which are completed early.

The Options Event will take place in school during the evening of Thursday 22nd January 2026 and will give students and parents the opportunity to find out more about the options choices available from subject leads and students currently studying the relevant courses.

The Options Form then needs to be completed by **Friday 30th January 2026** at the very latest.

**Mr Kirke**





All students have access to Unifrog, an excellent online careers and pathways platform designed to help them to explore their interests and make informed decisions about their future. Unifrog is new to all students, so they will gradually become more familiar with the platform and learn how to make the most of its features throughout the year.

You can watch the Unifrog Launch video here: [cdn.unifrog.org/video/45v2970bm9/480.mp4](https://cdn.unifrog.org/video/45v2970bm9/480.mp4)

### What is Unifrog?

Unifrog brings a wide range of information together in one place. It includes:

- a careers library: students can explore different job roles, short courses to help them build skills and broaden their knowledge;
- detailed subject information to support their GCSE choices;
- many other tools to guide them as they plan their next steps.

### How Unifrog Supports GCSE Decision Making

Over the coming weeks, students can use Unifrog to investigate the subjects available to them and how these link to future opportunities. The platform provides clear, reliable information to help them to feel confident and well-prepared when selecting their options.

### 'Unifrog 101' — Student Task

All students have been asked to complete the short 'Unifrog 101' course, which introduces them to the key features of the platform. This has been shared directly with students and will appear in their Unifrog messages.

### How You Can Support

We strongly encourage you to work with your child as they complete their 'Unifrog 101' course or to discuss the platform with them at home. A brief conversation about what they have explored can help ensure students feel supported and engaged as they make these important decisions.

**Mr Smith**

## Music Congratulations

Congratulations to Charlotte McGill (9W) for achieving Distinction in her Trinity College London Classical Guitar Grade 3 exam.

Congratulations also to Bethany Stenson (7E) for passing her grade 2 violin exam.

And finally a huge congratulations also to Alex Duggelby, Oliver Haseldine, Will Betts and Freddie Fawcett aka "The Pit Monkeys", who were featured on BBC Radio 1 last week. Do have a listen to hear Alex give an introduction, before the playing of their new single, "Butterfly" This will be released on all the usual platforms on 12th December. We are very proud of this 'Bishop' band.

**Mrs Armstrong**

## Peri Music - Guitar Lesson Trials

**FREE taster GUITAR taster lesson available!!**

These trial slots will be on a first come first, first serve basis and are there limited slots available. Please send any enquires to [peri@bishopstopford.com](mailto:peri@bishopstopford.com)

**Ms Merrey**



## Celebrating Jane Austen Day, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025

On Tuesday 16 December, amid a myriad of festive events in the run-up to Christmas, we will be celebrating Jane Austen Day. The date marks the 250th anniversary of her birth, with numerous events taking place across the country to highlight her significance within English literary history.

As part of our celebrations, we have launched two competitions:

- Y7-9: design an artistic postcard including a Jane Austen quotation.
- Y10-11: produce EITHER a poster OR 500-word (max.) summary of Austen's literary/historical significance.

Entries must be submitted to the English Faculty Office by 3.15pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> with prizes to be awarded on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>. We are really looking forward to seeing some creative entries – good luck!

“It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do.” – Jane Austen

**Mrs Hainsworth & Mrs Fletton**



## Maths Challenge

In November, six of our Year 12 and 13 Maths students, sat the follow-on round of the Senior Maths Challenge. We are delighted that all of them achieved a Silver or a Bronze certificate. These challenges are notoriously difficult and to make it through to the next round is testament to the aptitude these students have in Mathematics.

Well done to all - Samuel Baynes, Raiyan Elahi, Danny Atkinson, Louis Balding, Yousuf Bari, Ewan Mitchell. And there's a particular commendation to Samuel and Danny who achieved the best in the year for Year 12 and 13 respectively.

**Mr Lewis**

## Geologist of the Term

We are very proud of Tom Empey (Yr 13) for his hard work in Geology this term. He has been focused, organised, and engaged in a wider understanding of the subject. Keep up the good work Tom!

**Miss Baker and Miss Tierney**

## Creative Summer School 2026

Nottingham Trent University has sent information about their 2026 Creative Summer School. These week-long courses are aimed at 15-17 year olds. 500 students from across the country take part.

The courses are designed to develop young people's creative skills, build portfolios and gain insights into university life. On campus accommodation is often available and all information can be found on Nottingham Trent University's website.

This could be a great opportunity for Year 12 students thinking of creative degree courses post 18. Flyers are available from the DT and Art departments. [www.ntu.ac.uk/15-17shortcourses](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/15-17shortcourses)



**Mr Sidgwick**



# Sports Round up 1/12/25 – 11/12/25

## Football

**U13 Boys:** played Kingsthorpe in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and produced a convincing win. A swift turnaround saw them drawn v Latimer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round. Latimer proved too strong, so Year 8's cup run concludes for this year.

**U12 Girls:** Year 7 girls secured their first win the 1<sup>st</sup> round v Kingsthorpe. The second round v Wollaston is likely to be played in the New Year.

**U16 Boys:** look forward to their second round tie v Abbeyfield away. This is a mouthwatering encounter especially after their recent busy schedule with Mock Exams.

**U12 Boys:** Year 7 performed well over the past few weeks in the local district 9 a side competition, regularly finishing in the top 3.

## Hockey

**U13:** both the boys' & girls' teams played Robert Smyth Academy recently in another fantastic set of fixtures. They returned with a win for the boys and a second place for the girls.

**U14:** again another fixture v RSA for both boys & girls with the girls producing a convincing win 5-1. The boys started slowly going down 3-1 at half time. They drew level in the second half, pressing hard for the winner, but ran out of time 3-3.

**U16 Boys:** also played RSA in a closely fought game, narrowly missing out 3-2.

## Rugby

**1<sup>st</sup> XV (Yr 11,12,13):** played Wellingborough in their annual festive fixture. It was a great game and competitive throughout with Wellingborough took the spoils this year winning 24-10.

**U12:** Year 7 continue their development with recent games v Welland Park and this week took part in the first District Tournament, showing their prowess at the breakdown.

**U13:** the squad improves every game and played in the District Final v Prince William School last week. The lead exchanged hands a number of times, with PWS eventually coming out on top 5 tries to 4.

## Basketball

**U13 Girls:** Have improved significantly since they played in the first district round of fixtures, in both skill level and game understanding. Taking 2 teams to the District Finals the young ladies shone brightly. The A team finishing and the B team a strong 4th out of the whole District. Amazing work!

**U15 Boys:** the squad won the Kettering Schools' title with some really tight games and now await to play the winner of the Corby Schools to determine District Champions for this season.

**U16 Boys:** won the Kettering Schools' title with no other school really challenging them and also look forward to a District final.

## Dodgeball:

The Year 7/8 Girls and Boys played in the district tournament last week with the girls coming fourth and the boys winning. They now look forward to the Northants Schools Finals in February.

## Badminton:

We wish Alfie Rimmer the best of luck this Saturday as he competes in the U19 England National Badminton Championships in Milton Keynes. Alfie will play mens' doubles and mixed doubles. The competition sees the top 22 sets of players in the country compete for honours.

## Winter House Games:

The Winter House Games have taken place for Year 7 and Year 9, with Year 8 and 10 to follow next week and Year 11 after Christmas.

Full results will be published when all games have concluded.

**Mr Young**



We currently have the following exciting opportunity for an outstanding and ambitious individual:

## Science Technician

The successful candidate will work alongside colleagues, senior staff and governors and will contribute to unlocking students' unique potential.

We hope you are excited by the opportunity to work with us. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# Cucina

WEEK 2

Week Commencing: 03/11/2025 24/11/2025 15/12/2025 05/01/2026 26/01/2026  
 16/02/2026 09/03/2026 30/03/2026 20/04/2026

## CLASSIC HOT & HEARTY

### CLASSIC MAIN MEALS

### VEGETARIAN MAIN MEALS

#### MONDAY

Pork & Beef Sausage, Served with Mash with Onion Gravy

#### TUESDAY

Beef Lasagne with Homemade Garlic Bread & Garden Peas

#### WEDNESDAY

Hand Carved Roast British Turkey, Crisp Roasties, Seasonal Vegetables, & House Gravy

#### THURSDAY

Sweet & Sour Chicken, Served with Fried Rice

#### FRIDAY

Chip Shop "Fryday" Fish, Pizza or Fishcake & Chips with Peas & Tartare Sauce

#### MONDAY

Vegan Sausage Casserole with Gravy (VE)

#### TUESDAY

No Waste Cauliflower Cheese Pasta Bake (V)

#### WEDNESDAY

Cheese, Onion & Leek Pie, Served with Seasonal Vegetables & Gravy (V)

#### THURSDAY

Sweet & Sour Tofu with Fried Rice (V)

#### FRIDAY

Jamaican Squash Pasty with Chips & Peas (V)

### DESSERTS

#### MONDAY

Chocolate Sponge with Chocolate Sauce

#### TUESDAY

Pear & Ginger Crumble with Cinnamon Custard

#### WEDNESDAY

Jam Sponge with Custard

#### THURSDAY

Baked Churros

#### FRIDAY

Hot Chocolate Rocky Road

Fruit and Jelly Pots Available Daily

**HOMEMADE SOUP & FRESHLY BAKED BREAD Available Daily**

**JACKET POTATOES Topped with a Choice of: Cheese, Tuna or Beans Available Daily**

Cucina



**MADE YOUR WAY!**

**CHOOSE IT!  
ADD IT!  
TOP IT!**

Switch up your flavours with our street food-inspired range, available **Tuesday to Thursday**. With weekly rotating choices, there's always something tasty.

**Choose a base, add protein, and top it your way!**

Visit the restaurant to check out what's on offer each week

## NATURALLY

#### MONDAY

Fork Friendly Falafel Kebab (VE)

#### TUESDAY

Vegan Singapore Noodles (VE)

#### WEDNESDAY

Singapore Fried Rice (VE)

#### THURSDAY

The Big Plant Burger (VE)

#### FRIDAY

Garlic & Chilli Noodles (VE)

## TRATTORIA

#### MONDAY

Tomato & Basil Pasta

#### TUESDAY

Pasta in a Cheese Sauce

#### WEDNESDAY

Margherita or Pepperoni Pizza

#### THURSDAY

Creamy Pesto Pasta

#### FRIDAY

Margherita Pizza

