

SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER 2015



WELCOME!

We're delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Prendiville as Vice Principal for Data and Curriculum. He brings over twenty years' experience working in education; both in teaching and school leadership roles.



'Working at Oakbank is such an exciting opportunity. Whilst visiting Oakbank and on a tour of the school with Mrs Segrove, it became evident that she genuinely knew every student. This really struck a chord with me. In order to get the very best out of a student, you have to know them really well; to know their strengths and idiosyncrasies. The size and ethos of Oakbank provide the perfect environment to achieve what would be simply unattainable in a larger school. The position of Vice Principal is one of both responsibility and privilege. I have succeeded in my career because I work hard and enjoy what I do.'

Mr Prendiville
Vice Principal

STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Since joining the school, Mr Prendiville has been instrumental in establishing Oakbank's new Student Leadership Programme. Students have the opportunity to become involved in five very distinct areas of the school: The Student Council, Peer Mentors, Learning Leaders, The Charity Team and Sports Captains. Mr Prendiville and the rest of the school staff were impressed to receive applications from 26% of the student body.

'I feel so proud to be part of the Student Leadership team. I decided to apply to be a Learning Leader as I want to help out other people and learn new skills. I feel that in the future, I can apply these skills to my job and everyday life.'

So far, we have worked on a book trawl project to feed back about the way our work is marked. We have also been involved in selecting the type of planners we students would find useful next year.'

Jasmine Y (8K)



FOCUS ON MFL

This term in MFL, our Year 7 students have been learning how to use descriptive language to talk about where they live and to design their dream home. The Year 8 students have been looking at food and drink from a cultural point of view and how French meal times and English meal times and traditions differ. The Year 9s have been exploring the theme of jobs and the future.

A group of Year 9s have just returned from a four day residential trip to Paris. The trip was linked with MFL but there were also cross-curricular activities such as visiting the Science Museum and the Eiffel Tower. The students were all encouraged to speak French during the visit such as during a trip to the markets to ask questions and buy items. The trip was the perfect opportunity to use the language they learn in French lessons in an exciting and authentic situation, as well as being of great cultural value.



'I really love French and have a passion for the language and the culture. I started learning it in Year 8 of high school in Australia. When I was in Year 11, I did a French exchange to Toulouse and stayed with a French host family. This was such a great opportunity to learn in a French school and living with a host family made me so much more aware of the French culture.'

I was fortunate to have a really inspirational teacher who encouraged me to continue to learn French after I left school. I continued to study French alongside Teaching, at University for four years. I applied for a position as a language assistant at a middle school in France and moved to a town west of Paris called Le Mans. I really loved working there as it developed my language and teaching skills and it was such a great opportunity to live and work in France.'

Miss Showell

'From a young age I was interested in different countries and cultures and, in particular, France. I was keen to start learning French as I have French family and I wanted to be able to talk to them more easily. When we started learning French at primary school, I immediately fell in love with languages! I went on to study French and German at University and I have been lucky enough to have lived in both France and Germany, where I taught English in a large secondary school in Brittany and studied at a specialist translation and interpretation University in Rheinland-Pfalz respectively.'

I have returned to Oakbank this term after my maternity leave and have relished getting my teeth stuck back into school life! I am particularly looking forward to the challenge of implementing the GCSE French course for our current Year 9s who will begin their GCSE courses in September.'

Mrs Bruce

WIDENING HORIZONS

Our students have the opportunity to join a wide range of clubs and activities, which enrich the curriculum as part of a normal school day. Here are just two of the activities offered this term ...

Wing Project

This term, Mr Kidd has been leading on the Wing Project; teaching students the practical skills required to undertake a renovation project.



'We've been renovating the bike shed to make it a nicer place for the students to keep their bikes. In our first lesson, Mr Kidd taught us how to carry out risk assessments. Then we completely stripped the room back to a shell. We took off the ceiling tiles using a tower, which is like a free-standing scaffold. My favourite thing about this project is the hands-on, practical side.'

Luke W (7K)



'We'll be involved in every part of the project and have a say in the overall design. We're completely redecorating the walls and floors and building some more bike racks. I really enjoy working on the Wing Project. Mr Kidd makes sure everyone is always involved and that we all have a part to play.'

Daniel P (7K)

'The finished bike shed will be really smart and we plan to also have a bicycle repair room for the students to use in emergencies. We're also going to make a locker room with pigeon holes for cycle helmets and other equipment. I love working with my hands so I'm really enjoying learning new things. It's a great team here; they're all my best friends.'

James T (7C)

Crest Awards

CREST is the British Science Association's flagship programme for young people, providing science enrichment activities to inspire and engage 5 to 19-year olds. It is the only nationally recognised accreditation scheme for project work in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

British Science Association

This term, the Science Department introduced the CREST Award Scheme for Year 8 students. The scheme encourages students to build their skills and demonstrate personal achievement in project work. It involves hands on and enquiry-based learning; exploring their own interests in Science without the constraints of the curriculum. One group is currently designing a skate park; researching the different types of wood and metals required for the construction, whilst also calculating the speed in which boards will travel down different sized ramps held at varying angles.

The students are working towards Bronze awards and will progress on to Silver and Gold awards. This group can then act as mentors to subsequent year groups who join the scheme in future years. In July, a whole school Crest Award Day will give every student the opportunity to explore real-world Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths projects in an exciting way.

We always welcome the many ways in which parents, carers and the community can get involved and enrich the school with their particular skills and talents. Are you, or your organisation, able to help run one of our Widening Horizons activities? Do you have some spare time to hear our students read? Could your company provide careers advice or work experience? To get involved, call us on **0118 988 3616** or visit www.oakbank-cfbt.org/howcanyouhelp.

COMIC RELIEF

We love to support good causes at Oakbank and Red Nose Day was no exception. The Charity Team organised fund raising events, as well as stalls being run by each of the Year 9 tutor groups. Some of the activities included a chocolate fountain and popcorn stall, a prize raffle and traditional funfair games. House points were awarded with Curie earning 250 points for 100% participation and Hillary 250 points for raising the most money.

There were also stocks where students could pay to throw wet sponges at the teachers. An enormous thank you goes to Mrs Calloway, Miss Chanter, Miss Hann, Mr Scrutton, Miss Showell and Miss Young for volunteering to take turns in the stocks. You definitely each qualify for the 'Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award!'



Miss Chanter putting her neck on the block for charity!

We must also say an enormous thank you to the following companies for donating the raffle prizes: Davis Tate (£50 voucher), Smyths Toy Superstore (a PS4 Game) and The Co-operative (a box of chocolates). Lastly, thank you to The Coombes CofE Primary School PTA who kindly lent us the stocks.

During the 30 minute lunch break, we managed to raise £311.55 which equates to an amazing £10.39 per minute. Our numbers may be few but our hearts are big!

SAFETY FIRST

Ensuring that our students have access to safe routes to and from school is vitally important to us all. There are a number of improvements we would like to put forward for consideration such as additional street lighting and a review of local access roads to consider speed limits, traffic calming and pedestrian crossings where appropriate. Please help us to raise awareness of these issues by emailing Shinfield Parish Council who can in turn highlight our concerns to the Local Authority: sue.roberts@shinfieldparish.gov.uk

As a community school, we want to enable safe, independent travel by bike or on foot for all our students. Please support us by raising awareness of this matter. If you drive to Oakbank, please be considerate of our students and the local residents at all times.

KEY EVENTS AND DATES FOR THE DIARY

Please check the school website at www.oakbank-cfbt.org for further details.

April

Mon 20th	Summer Term begins
Wed 22nd	'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' Theatre Trip & Drama Workshop
Tue 28th	Y8 girls HPV
Wed 29th	E-Safely Parent Evening
Thu 30th	Junior Maths Challenge Y6 Information Evening

May

Fri 15th	Composition Competition
Fri 22nd-24th	Y7 Trip to Osmington Bay
Mon 25th	Half Term Begins

June

Mon 1st	INSET Day
Tues 2nd	Back to school for students
Mon 8th	Parents' Forum
Wed 24th	Y6 Transition Day
Thu 25th	Y6 Transition Day

July

Fri 3rd	Crest Award Day
Thu 9th	Sports Day
Mon 13th	Sports Day (reserve)
Tue 14th	Bastille Day
Wed 15th	Presentation Evening
Fri 17th	Founders Day Celebration
Mon 20th	Positive Attendance Trip
Tues 21st	Summer Term Ends (12:35)