

SUMMER TERM NEWSLETTER 2014



A MESSAGE FROM MRS SEGROVE



'A small school with big ambitions' was the phrase in the advert for the role of Principal at Oakbank that swung it for me. Once I had read those words, I was hooked. I loved Oakbank from the minute I read about it; being appointed Principal of this community school is the highlight of my career to date.

The staff and students of our school are incredible. I have been overwhelmed by the positivity, community spirit and passion they all have for the success of our school. The vision I have is the same as the founders – a community school which has high aspirations for its students. We want to provide quality first teaching which inspires a thirst for learning. We want to create an environment where learning is not just about what happens in the classroom but about the lifelong memories that the journey through school will create. We want to work with the whole community to grow and develop the global citizens of the future.

I am delighted that I will be sharing Oakbank's amazing journey with our students, our staff, our parents and our community. It is going to be a real adventure.'

Maggie Segrove

FAREWELL TO MR KILPATRICK

'It has been a pleasure working with the students, parents, staff, governors and founders of Oakbank and watching the school undertake a journey of rapid improvement over the past six months. The journey of improvement continues and will be given considerable added impetus when the school's new Principal takes up her post in September. I am sure that the school is close to the standard where it will be judged good by Ofsted and it has the capacity to become outstanding.

May I wish you all the best of fortune for coming years when Oakbank will achieve its potential and its rightful place as one of the gems of the free schools movement.'

Andy Kilpatrick OBE

FOCUS ON ENGLISH



'The newly appointed leader for English has resolutely set about making necessary changes to the content of the English curriculum. Her energy and determination are having a significant impact on students' confidence and progress in writing, reading and speaking.'
Ofsted 2014

This term students have been involved in a teaching strategy called 'Co-operative Learning' which encourages groups to work very effectively within a structured framework. The system allows each student to have accountability and be responsible for different outcomes.

and beyond. I am rewarded daily with their effort, enthusiasm and genuine love for my subject.'

Mrs Mead

We asked some of our Year 8 students about English at Oakbank ...



Each class has been focussing on the various elements of writing such as descriptive, persuasive, non-fiction and creative; all based on the topic of being shipwrecked.

'I am a very lucky lady indeed to be teaching English to the students at Oakbank and am continuously inspired by the level at which they work. Our students are very able and I teach them a rigorous and challenging curriculum which requires 100% effort and commitment. The students have responded in a way that a teacher could only dream of. Students understand that my expectations are high but that they are rewarded with accelerated progress and genuine and valued success. The greatest reward being a sound foundation to ensure success at GCSE

'My favourite thing about English is the teacher because she helps us when we are stuck and I love the Co-operative Learning.'

Tom Lamb

'We are pushed to get to a higher level without feeling uncomfortable.'

Chloe Griffiths

'English lessons are fantastic and fun and they challenge me. I now know how to move to the next level.'

Jordan Brown

'English is now more challenging and more exciting.'

Adi Atkinson

'Our teacher has helped us progress rapidly and we have been trying our hardest.'

Joseph Vaughan

ACTIVITIES

The enrichment programme this term has offered a diverse and stimulating programme of clubs and activities. Students have had the opportunity to learn about different cultures around the world in Geography Club, take computers apart in How Things Work, burn off some energy in Multi Sports and put up tents in Oakbank Challenge.

Miss Tingley's Song Writing Club



TEACHER PROFILE: MRS WALKER, HEAD OF HUMANITIES



'I developed a love of history at an early age when I acquired an interest in the Tudors and Stuarts and as a child, I frequently dragged my family around historical castles!

The defining moment came when I discovered that some people denied that the Holocaust had taken place. I realised that teaching history would inform future generations of the mistakes of the past. Without an understanding of our history, I believe that society is destined to repeat these mistakes.'

To mark the World War I centenary later this year, Mrs Walker is organising a whole school history

project. This will include students researching their own family history in the hope of uncovering some personal accounts of both World Wars.

'In order to develop a sound understanding of the past, it's important to identify with the political and social feelings of that time and draw comparisons with the present day.'

Mrs Walker also has a passion for gardening and runs the Gardening Club as one of the school's activity sessions. The club offers students the opportunity to learn about all aspects of horticulture and as a result, enhances some of the school's outside spaces with flowers, plants and vegetables.



SPORTS DAY 2014

Oakbank's annual Sports Day took place on Monday 7th July. With the sun shining and meticulous organisation by Mr Spinner and Mr Green, the day was set to be a huge success. During the morning, students took part in the 800m, 1500m, shot-putt, high jump, javelin, and standing long jump.

In the afternoon the atmosphere changed as Mr Sutton added an eclectic mix of music and the entire school came onto the field. Staff and students gathered under their House coloured gazebos to cheer on or participate in more track events.

The PSA supported the event with much needed ice lollies and drinks for students and staff. Points were awarded throughout the day with 8 points for first place, through to 1 point for 8th. Each winning participant was presented with a medal and there was a trophy for the winning House at the end of the event.

After all the points were added up, the Y8 trophy was awarded to Curie, and the Y7 trophy to Hillary.



A HUGE THANK YOU...

We would like to thank parents and members of the wider community for their ongoing support of Oakbank this term.

Parent volunteers (and students) have been involved in work parties to help decorate some areas of the school interiors and bring some much needed colour to our beautiful school campus.

Laurels Plant Centre have once again generously donated plants and flowers to Mrs Walker's gardening club. Parents have also kindly donated plants and tools this year.

A special thank you must go to our wonderful Parent Staff Association who have continued to work tirelessly to raise funds and enhance the learning of our students. We hope that the parents of students starting at Oakbank in September will join and support this 'small but mighty' team of dedicated parents.