

# AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER 2014



## SIMPLY AMAZING!

The end of my first term as Principal at Oakbank is fast approaching and it has been nothing short of amazing. In the words of one of the students, 'it's been adventurous! There have been ups and downs with some challenges to overcome. There are still challenges to overcome but as a community we will get through them and succeed.'

I have said many times that I am so proud to be the Principal at Oakbank – I really mean it! Every day brings something new to rejoice in. From our morning line up where we feel privileged to greet every student to working together as a community. It is such a tremendous feeling to hear the positive feedback from parents, both existing and prospective, staff and most importantly from our students.

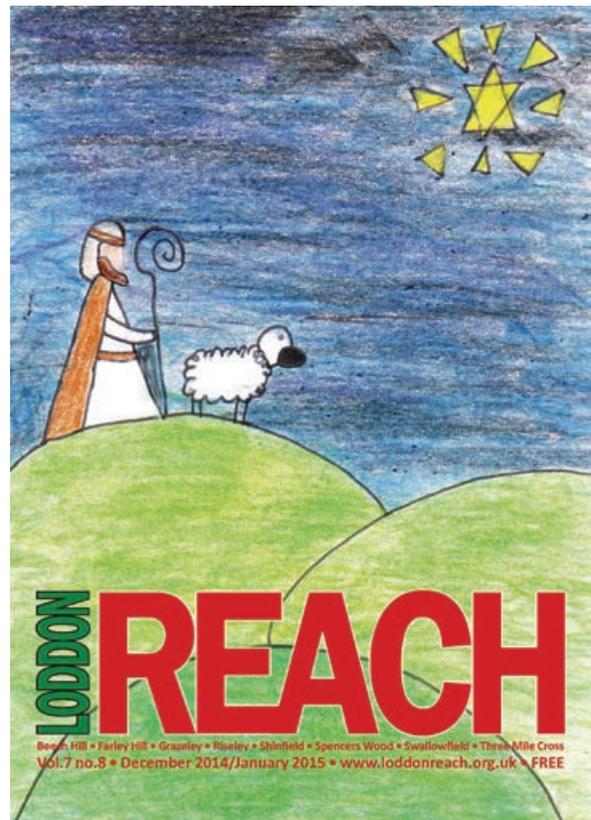
Our 'Oakbank Opens Its Doors' events have proved hugely successful; the feedback from these has been overwhelmingly encouraging and visitors to the school never fail to be impressed by your children, our students. One parent commented, 'Really enjoyed visiting Oakbank this morning - it seems to be a very happy school and all the students were so beautifully behaved and engaged in their learning. I am proud to be an Oakbank parent.' I want to extend an invitation to anyone to come and visit us and see for yourselves.



As this term closes, it just leaves me to wish you all a very good Christmas break. 2015 is going to be a great year for the Oakbank community.

**Mrs Segrove**  
Principal

## LODDON REACH



Many congratulations to Jessica Haddock (9H) for winning Loddon Reach magazine's cover design competition. Jessica's picture was amongst hundreds of entries submitted by Oakbank and many other local schools. The design will be used for the front cover of the magazine's December issue. Congratulations also go to Pheobe Edwards (8M) who was selected as a runner up.



**SCHOOLS  
TRUST**

# NEW TEACHER PROFILES

Welcome to all the new staff who joined the school in September. We asked some of them about themselves, the subjects they teach and their first term at Oakbank.



**Mrs Mulholland**  
Head of Science

I have been teaching for 14 years and I can whole-heartedly say that I love my job and am constantly delighted by the students' ability to amaze me. At school I was lucky enough to have a couple of inspirational teachers who not only had a real love of their subject but could communicate it effectively. It was definitely my Science teacher in Year 7 who really made me interested in the subject. He was a quiet and calm man but when he spoke he drew you in and could make anything fascinating.

I feel very lucky because for the first time in my career I am working in a lovely new laboratory which has everything in working order! The small school feel of Oakbank provides a real opportunity to get to know the pupils very well. Since joining I have had the pleasure of teaching Key Stage 3 again, after many years of teaching GCSE and A'level Chemistry. The excitement that the Year 7 students have at Oakbank is tremendous and makes lessons interesting and fun. I look forward to seeing their successes as they get older.

I had never appreciated the enormous impact teachers could make on others' lives until I was fortunate enough to do some voluntary work in a school some years ago. After this, I pursued a career as a teacher. PE is such a wonderful subject to teach as it develops a range of aptitudes which are so important to students' learning and life skills. It also plays a significant role in shaping the way young people should live their lives as healthy human beings. I'm inspired by the people I work with; both staff and students.

I enjoy working at Oakbank because of the students; they are a credit to the school and its community. The PE Department has established a thriving extra-curricular programme with a variety of fixtures across all years, where we compete against other local schools. We have also established community links by way of sports clubs based at our school including Bulmershe Gymnastics and Reading Football Club. All of which offer an exciting curriculum designed to challenge every student to lead healthy, active lives now and in the future.



**Mr Hood**  
Head of PE



**Miss Chanter**  
Head of Design & Technology

I love every minute at Oakbank; everyone has done their utmost to make me welcome. This term, the Year 7 students have leapt into the workshop to learn basic woodworking skills which run alongside a graphic design project. They have looked at Fibonacci and the Divine Proportions and learnt some image editing techniques that they will use to design their own logo.

Our Year 8 students have really impressed me with their enthusiasm and creativity as they have worked on a project studying the work of Italian design house Alessi and used this work as inspiration to each create a fun, colourful acrylic clock. Year 9 started the term learning about the design process with entries for a national design competition to design a product for cyclists. To build on their experience of the design process, they are designing and making a speaker for an MP3 player using a design concept called Emotional Design. I am even more excited about the projects that we have in the pipeline including jewellery making.

# CHARITY AMBASSADORS

We are a group of Year 9 students who have set up a new Charity Team at Oakbank. Our aim is to organise fund raising events for the school. This term, with the help of student volunteers, we held a bake sale in aid of Children in Need; a charity that makes a real difference to the lives of children and young adults across the UK. Our next fund raising event will be bag packing in Morrisons supermarket. We plan to support numerous charities including MacMillan, Cancer Research UK, The Samaritan's Purse Shoe Box Appeal and Water Aid. It is a real privilege to represent Oakbank as its Charity Ambassadors. We hope we can help those around us, in our local community and our global community.

**Rowena L., Isabelle dIR., Jessica C., Rebecca J., Rhiannon H.**



# REMEMBRANCE DAY



On Sunday 9th November, Mrs Segrove accompanied us to the Remembrance Day Service in Shinfield. We felt extremely honoured to be representing Oakbank on behalf of all the students. We laid a wreath at the war memorial and observed two minutes silence. At school on Tuesday 11th November, students were invited to wear their Scout and Girl Guide uniforms to school in honour of the day. Mrs Segrove held a special assembly with all students and school staff attending. Mrs Segrove spoke about the importance of remembering those who have served their country in conflicts and read some remembrance poems. The whole school observed two minutes silence to honour the fallen.

**Heather G. and Joseph V. 9M**

# ALSO THIS TERM...

## **Making History**

Oakbank are delighted to be collaborating with Spencers Wood Local History Group on two very exciting audio projects. Firstly, there will be an interview with Mrs Segrove, talking about her role as Principal at Oakbank. The second project is very much aligned to the Radio 4 "Listening Project" and will involve our Year 9 students. Teaming up with Head of Year 9, Mr Sutton, the history group will task a selection of students - who were the school's inaugural cohort in 2012 - to record their own personal impressions and experiences of starting at Oakbank. The project will entail each student recording a three minute media clip; the best of which will be uploaded to the history group's website at [www.swlhg.co.org](http://www.swlhg.co.org).

## **PSA Update**

Our wonderful PSA team have once again done us proud this term. They began by running a cake stall at Spencers Wood Carnival to raise funds for the school, have provided refreshments and held a prize raffle at our recent Evening of Arts event and ended the year by holding a fantastic Winter Disco for the students.

They're now in the process of organising a Quiz Night for the New Year; further details of this to follow in due course. If you would like to get involved with the PSA in any capacity – no matter how small – please see our website calendar for details of forthcoming meeting dates.

## **New Website**

This term saw the launch of our new look website and we are currently in the process of developing the layout and content to make the site more informative and user friendly. We would welcome your views on anything you think would enhance the site so please email your ideas to [webmaster@oakbank-cfbt.org](mailto:webmaster@oakbank-cfbt.org). In the meantime, please visit us at [www.oakbank-cfbt.org](http://www.oakbank-cfbt.org) where you will also find links to follow us on Twitter.

## **Thank You**

We're really grateful to two companies; British Ceramic Tiles and Steve Robinson Glass Art for each generously donating tiles to the school. Some of the tiles will be used to create a periodic table in the Science Department and others will be used in various projects around the school to inspire our students and make our campus more beautiful.

# FOCUS ON ART

I have always loved Art and Design; it was my favourite subject at school and an area that I knew I wanted to continue into my adult life. Parents and staff always comment about my enthusiasm and passion for the subject, which is something I try to evoke in the classroom. After 18 years of teaching I still take great pleasure when a student pushes the boundaries and completes an outcome which has 'stretched' the theme or their skills.

At Oakbank I consider myself fortunate to be able to teach Art and Design to all the year groups; to plan and orchestrate a curriculum is a very exciting process. 'Building' an Art Department is a unique opportunity; in the past year I have witnessed the students' skills develop and progress, which is evident in their amazing outcomes. Walking along the Art corridor you are hit by the colour, vibrancy and quality of the students' paintings. I am so proud of their Abstract work and feel honoured that I was able to witness their creations.

I have planned a curriculum which suits the needs of the students and looks at a variety of media, techniques

and artists; some contemporary as well as the more well-known artists from the past. Students in Year 7 are taught basic skills in paint, drawing and 3D sculpture, which are further developed in Year 8. The Year 9 curriculum requires students to work in a similar manner to that of GCSE; studying a variety of artists and producing a final outcome in February.

The Arts Evening that took place on 11th December was a wonderful opportunity to showcase some of this term's projects. The Year 7's three-dimensional hand sculptures looked beautiful decorating the Christmas tree and showed how creative our students can be. Year 8's work demonstrated their hard work as they had been developing their drawing skills to produce experimental studies in a variety of media and techniques. Finally the Year 9 students exhibited their understanding of concepts and how artists work; demonstrating how themes, colours or ideas can inspire you to create a personal outcome.

**Ms Ince**  
**Lead Teacher Art**

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Please see our website calendar nearer the time for specific times and details.

### January

Tue 6th INSET day  
Wed 7th Spring term starts  
Wed 14th Year 8 Trip to Tate Modern  
Wed 14th Governors' Meeting  
Thu 22nd Year 9 Parent Information Evening

### February

Thu 5th KS4 Courses Evening  
Thu 5th-9th Year 9 Trip to France  
Thu 12th Year 8 Targeted Parents' Evening  
Fri 13th Valentine's Day Bake-off  
Mon 16th Half term starts  
Fri 20th Half term ends  
Mon 23rd Parent Forum 18.00 – 19.00  
Wed 25th KS4 Pathways Evening

### March

Thu 5th Governors' Meeting

### April

Thu 2nd Spring term ends