

Paralympic trip

French exchange

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A publication for
Oaklands Catholic School
and Sixth Form College

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Oaklands

Catholic School and Sixth Form College

A Specialist Humanities and Science College

From the Headteacher's desk

Last week I read that the BBC has revamped this year's Sports Personality of the Year Awards in the wake of an unprecedented summer of success by our sports men and women. The main shortlist is going to be extended from 10 to 12 and the voting system has also been radically overhauled. The shortlist is compiled by sporting gurus who last year controversially failed to list a woman in their top ten. Reflecting on the success in the summer and the support for the Paralympics, I hope a substantial number of Paralympians are within their choices. By the time this goes to print the shortlist may have been announced. What will unite all the names on the shortlist is that they are all champions.

So what makes a champion? How is it that Jonnie Peacock can attain a gold medal for Great Britain in the T44 100m? Part of the answer lies in training and part in talent. Probably, as with all athletes and performers, the answer lies in a programme of practice and repeat. Behind every success is hours of work developing fitness and skill and tuning the mind to the task ahead.

There are parallels here with our Christian lives. Faith is something that has to be worked on to become a champion in the eyes of God. We cannot simply join the club and wait for the rest to happen. Faith involves determination, commitment and a programme of prayer and reflection. The most effective athletes work closely with personal coaches and trainers, this relationship cultivates their talent. God has given us a personal trainer in the form of the Holy Spirit, provided we develop that relationship and play our part, we too will become champions.

Now that the clocks have gone back and the first half term is behind us, students in Years 11, 12 and 13 have started to realise the pressure is now on; within four half terms until they will be immersed in their final public examinations. Working in partnership with parents is a key component to

student success, I would like to thank all parents who have attended Parents' Evenings, consultations and induction sessions this half term. Parental engagement with these is a visible sign to students that all parties are 'on the same page'. As we start the next half term there are a number of issues that need reinforcing so that the success we have already seen continues.

Uniform

Whilst the vast majority of students adhere to the Governors' policy on uniform and appearance, a small minority of students require constant reminding, often these students attend school from home

incorrectly dressed. Please can you ensure that your child attends school with the correct equipment, correctly dressed and without wearing make-up or jewellery that contravenes the policy. Mrs Oldroyd, Deputy Head, will happily discuss specific issues with parents.

Attendance and punctuality to lessons

The attendance rates for the school are very good. I am sure all parents understand the importance of punctuality to lessons and morning registrations. The positive correlation between attendance and student progress is beyond doubt. If your child is away then they are responsible for finding out what has been missed.

Conduct on the way to and from school

Over the last few months members of the public and the bus companies have raised concerns over student conduct on some public service buses. With some students undertaking long journeys to and from school without adult supervision, the need for good behaviour and mature conduct is great. On the bus students represent the school and your family. The responsibility for transport between home and school remains with parents and, in some respects, is beyond the remit of the school. Without necessarily drawing a conclusion, where names are given to the school we will notify parents. Current legislation makes it quite clear that the school can sanction students who behave inappropriately outside school. As I am sure you can appreciate 'drilling down' into what occurs on the way to and from school is a difficult process. Your support in reinforcing the good behaviour that is demonstrated by the vast majority of students is appreciated.

Homework

This is an area where parental support has a direct impact on student outcome. As students approach internal and external exams homework moves away from set exercises towards revision and preparation for controlled assessment. This does not mean 'no homework'. Many students organise their own homework and revision very effectively, others less so. If you know your child needs additional support please contact us and we will work with you in this area.

Use of Social Networking

Social networking is, for better or worse, part of many young peoples' lives. Parents are often oblivious to what goes on in this virtual world. Although this occurs at home or via mobile devices and, in many respects is beyond the reach of the school, conversations between students outside of school can have a profound effect on their happiness and wellbeing in school. Many youngsters

use social networking safely, but sadly this is not always the case. I would ask that if you are aware of any issue you inform the school.

There have been a number of significant successes this term including the money raised for charity across all year groups. I was delighted to present a large number of Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards a few weeks ago. This is a measure of what outstanding students we have in school.

Unfortunately this term a number of staff have suffered unexpected long term illness. Please remember them in your thoughts and prayers.

Mrs Eyre, who has been a fantastic servant to the school, has been directed to reduce her commitment in school for health reasons. As a result she will stand down from the position of Head of Year 10; we wish her a speedy recovery. In the interim Mrs F Quinn and Mrs J Smith will take on the day-to-day role of managing student pastoral issues in Year 10. Mrs McConn-Finch will also keep a close eye on the year group.

Finally, your prayerful support is always a great boon to the school community, thank you for this and the practical support you provide for your children and the school.

Matthew Quinn



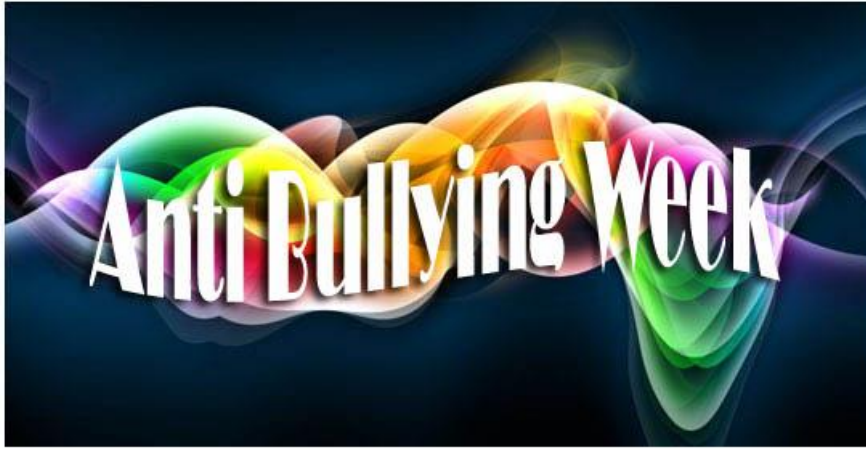
Duke Of Edinburgh Award



During the last academic year 2011 - 2012, I am delighted to report that 45 students have completed the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Every participant has shown a commitment to volunteering in their community, learning a skill and improving their physical ability as well as undertaking an expedition. All successful participants deserve congratulations for the perseverance and determination they have demonstrated. This year it is encouraging that 55 new participants have 'signed on' to undertake the Bronze Award as well as 30 participants, many of whom completed their Bronze Award last year, who will be taking on the additional challenges presented by the Silver Award.

There are a number of participants who have only a few issues to address and they too could complete and receive their Award. I would urge all those who are in this position to complete and upload their evidence, there is no reward in starting something and not finishing it! We are now moving on to dealing with our new participants so it would be very helpful if those who wish to complete do so as soon as possible.

Congratulations to:	<i>Anya Eastman</i>
Silver Award	<i>James Tizzard</i>
<i>Matthew Everett</i>	<i>Liam Farrell</i>
	<i>Beth Udy</i>
Bronze Award	<i>Gillian Glover</i>
<i>Heather Anderson</i>	<i>Edward Welton</i>
<i>Anna Neville</i>	<i>Anna Geatrell</i>
<i>Hannah Aspley</i>	<i>James Wise</i>
<i>Kiera Quickfall</i>	<i>Naomi Groome</i>
<i>Bjork Aston</i>	<i>William Wren</i>
<i>Lucy Riddle</i>	<i>Carmina Harrod</i>
<i>Tess Barrows</i>	<i>Tavis Yung</i>
<i>Anna Robinson</i>	<i>Samuel Hayward</i>
<i>Eleanor Carver</i>	<i>Louise Hedley</i>
<i>Delanie Rutter</i>	<i>Ruth Hedley</i>
<i>Emily Clark</i>	<i>Sebastian Jarvis</i>
<i>Betty Seymour</i>	<i>Madeline Johnston</i>
<i>Michael Cottam</i>	<i>Matthew Kingswell</i>
<i>Esme Scott</i>	<i>Laura Lee</i>
<i>Erin Cregan</i>	<i>Daniel Mann</i>
<i>Jack Shore</i>	<i>Holly Martins</i>
<i>Nicole Crosbourn</i>	<i>Edward McPhee</i>
<i>Christopher Stone</i>	<i>Roxanne O'Doherty</i>
<i>Ellie Dommersen</i>	<i>Jack Oldroyd</i>
<i>James Stone</i>	



Anti Bullying Week

The RRR group are helping to organise Anti Bullying week this year. It is a really important week where we can inform people that bullying is a very bad thing and make them think carefully about their behaviour. We have to let people know how badly it can affect people,

sometimes very seriously. We want to tell people to get help if it happens to them and not to stand by and watch other people get bullied.

During the week we will be organising assemblies with some drama, there will be information all around the school with posters and notices on the computer screens and students will have activities in their tutor groups and in PDC. We will start each day with special prayers.

This year the RRR group of students is helping Oaklands to become a Rights Respecting School where we realise that we all have a responsibility to act in appropriate ways and accept people for who they are. The United Nations Rights of the Child says that young people have the right to feel secure and safe in school. At Oaklands this fits in really well with our Catholic, caring community.

By Rachael Lavery and Kiera Weeks 9 St. Vincent and Tabatha Harrington 9 St. Clare

Off By Heart Poetry Competition Students

Once again this year the standard was high and competition fierce in the annual 'Off by Heart' Poetry competition.

This auspicious event took place in the Library on 8th October with each Year 7 class highly represented. The tough job of judging was undertaken by a jovial band of Sixth Formers, all future candidates at Oxbridge.

The standard was set high, with students learning and reciting a classic poem. Not an easy task! We had poems by the likes of Poe, Shelley and Masfield to name but a few. The students wholly embraced the task, some even bringing in props to enhance their performances.

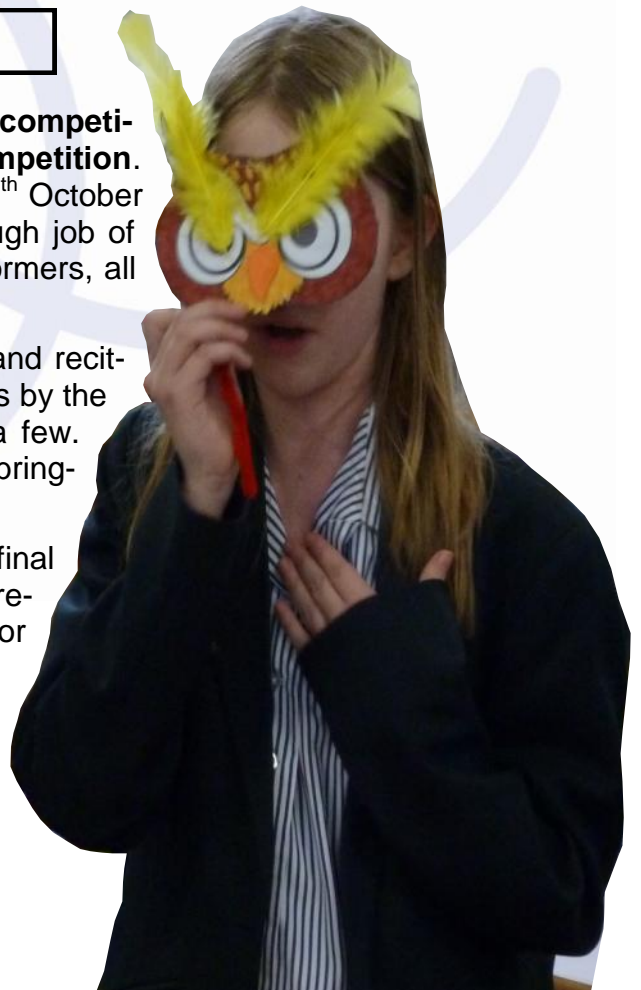
After much deliberation from the judging panel, the final decisions were made. There would be two prizes presented; one for the most scholarly poem and one for the best performance.

Prize winners

Most scholarly poem:
George Rag-Griffiths 7 St. Martin

Best performance:
Mia Cotton and Lulu Duckworth 7 St. Teresa

News of the Year 8 winners to follow on the website.



Students enter Science Competition Students



In September I went with three other students, Jonathan Peach, Afua Baidoo and Annabel Page to a Chemistry competition run by the Royal Society of Chemistry at Portsmouth Grammar School.

We were one of eight teams, three were state schools and the others were private schools so we knew the competition was going to be fierce. During the day we had to complete a number of tasks, some practical some written. The practical tasks started with a dilution, we had to find out how water influenced the time it took for the solutions we were provided with to turn to a dark colour.

For the next experiment we were given another group of solutions which we heated under a flame. From the colour of the flame we were able to deduce the composition of the solution, we then had to create a reaction between the solutions and an acid. Again, the colour of the reaction indicated the composition of the solution. The analysis and combination of the two tests provided us with the information required to identify the exact composition of each solution.

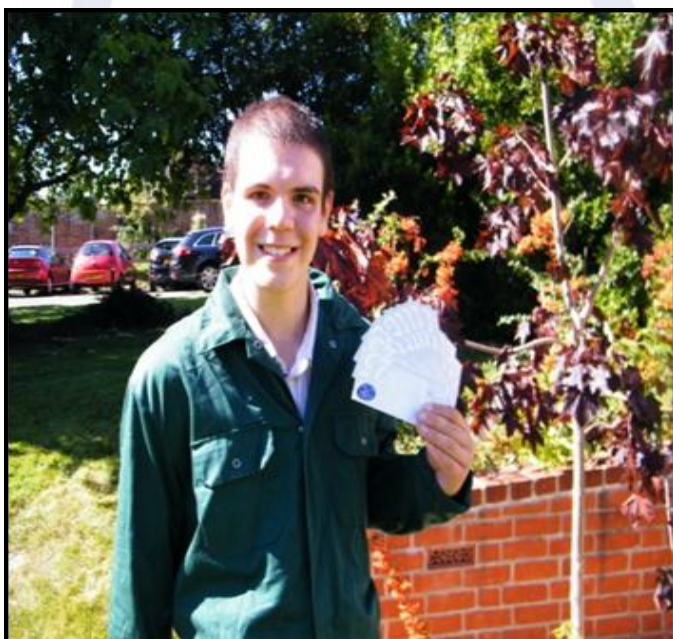
The written task saw us split into two groups, we had to complete a booklet in a given time. Dr Dixon said that the questions were particularly challenging.

Some of our experiments used dangerous chemicals such as acids, so these had to be carried out with precision or the results would be invalid. The precision also insures that the chemists health and safety is considered. There were five prizes awarded; we were awarded the prize for this element of the day. We were very proud of our achievements.

Our thanks to Dr Dixon for taking us to the event.

Alex Poole-Gleed 10 St. Teresa

Horticulture Ms Osborne



We congratulate Alan Monk (opposite) in Year 12 on winning this National Gardening Competition. His knowledge of plants and dedication to the environment enabled him to win his age category. For this he received a mini Flip Video Camera, a Bulldog spade and fork, an engraved trowel, £500 of gardening vouchers and a day of work experience with the team at RHS Wisley. <http://apps.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening/>

Thank you to all the students in Food Tech who remembered to put their peelings in the compost bins in the classroom. Year 10 have just emptied out four compost bins of well-rotted compost and dug it into the beds to improve the soil. There were a huge number of beneficial insects in each compost bin....

We have applied for a grant from Neals Yard Remedies <http://www.nealsyardremedies.com/> for a 'Bee Lovely' grant so that we can plant flowers which will attract and increase the dying population of native honey bees.

Congratulations to **Daniel Gilbert** (Year 11) who won the Oaklands Horticulture Student of the Year Award at the end of term in July. He received it for his mature attitude, hard work and organisation in lessons.

French Exchange Students



On Wednesday 17th October, 30 students from Years 9 and 10, accompanied by Miss Caspall and Mr Wyatt, started their week long trip to Lyon for the French Exchange visit. The school has successfully run the exchange programme for many years. The French students return to Oaklands in March 2013.

Doreen White a Year 9 student writes:

The Exchange was amazing! The families and Frenchships (get it?), the birds of prey park trip was so funny and we all had to move around to make sure none of the birds landed on our heads. The lessons we attend-

ed at school were fun – I had maths and it was easy! We also met the Assistant Mayor of the town we stayed in. We made crêpes with our exchange partners they were delicious! The best part was the weekend spent with our families. I really enjoyed the French Exchange and would recommend it to everyone.

One wet Wednesday morning at the end of September (after weeks of persuading Mrs McConn-Finch to bring in Spanish food for our lesson), she

Olé olé olé

did! We tried a whole range of food such as chorizo (a paprika type of salami), patatas bravas (made by Miss!), salchichón (my favourite), jamón Serrano and tasty Manchego cheese. Whilst we were sampling the foods, Mr Quinn came to join us and he also tried out some of the foods.

Although we were having fun, we also learnt a lot about the food, like the fact that there is a really wide range of foods, that it tasted much better than we expected (in fact, some was absolutely delicious) and that there is a really wide variety of flavours. We also tried some Medialunas with cream but our favourite was the Churros with hot chocolate which lots of Spanish people enjoy late at night (or early in the morning!) when they've been out enjoying themselves in the evenings! We completed a questionnaire on the food (in Spanish of course) and we also rated each food out of five stars – most got five stars from us!

Patrick Bailey-Green (11 St Clare)



On Friday 7th September a group of 20 Year 8 boys travelled up to the Paralympics. After taking in the sights of the Olympic Park they watched the Wheelchair Rugby. The game was between Canada and Sweden. The game was split into 4 quarters of 8 minutes. The game was a very hard contest with its nickname of 'Murder Ball' being fully understood. The game was close right up until the end with Canada only winning by 2 goals. The atmosphere was great with students choosing their favourite players. A great time was had by all.



Spooks in the Canteen

During the year the Catering team organises a number of theme days. At the end of last half term Halloween came early to the canteen. In addition to the usual options, students could purchase other selections including toffee apples. For the main meal the rice had an unusual green hue to it! Very tasty nonetheless.

Theme days are advertised to the students in advance, particularly as students who normally bring a packed lunch like to purchase food across the counter on these days.

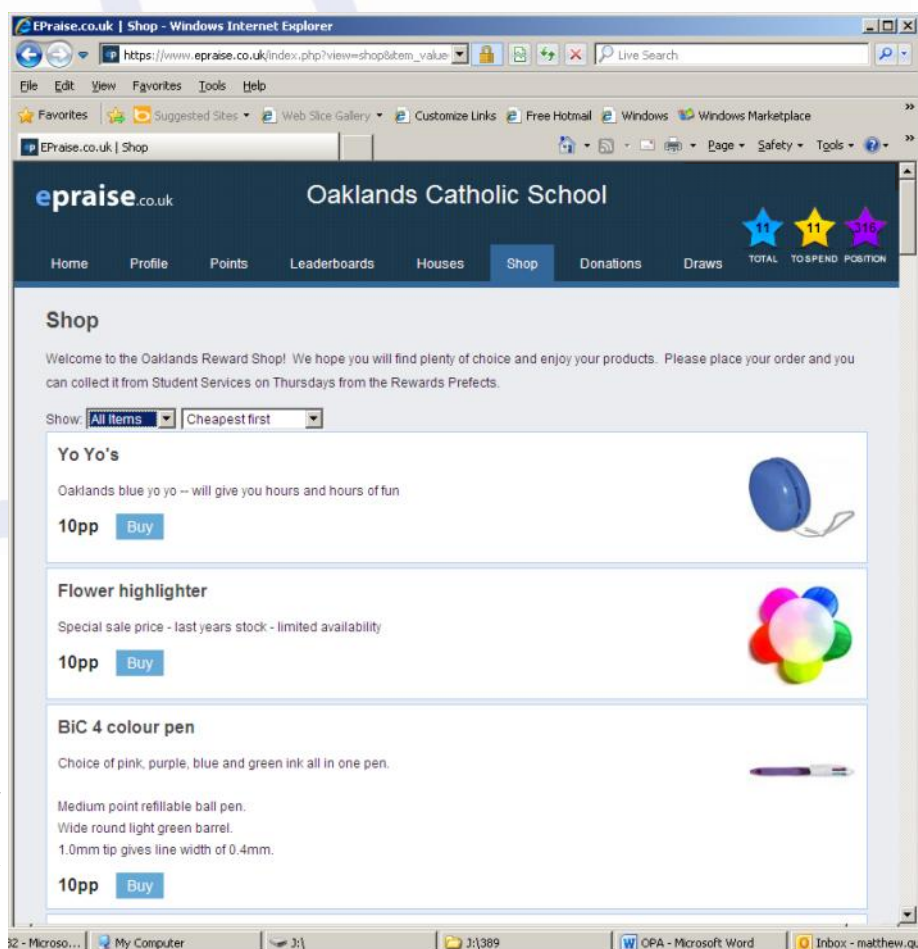
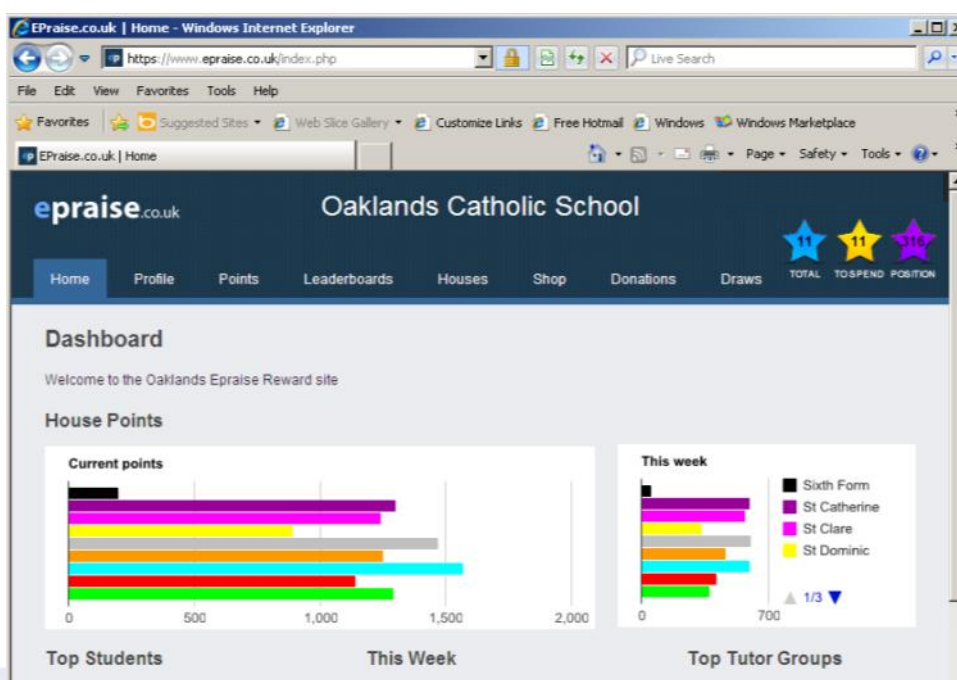
As is tradition the school will be providing a Christmas dinner for students at the end of this term. More details to follow.



E-praise – a new rewards system for Oaklands.

We all know that by positively reinforcing good behaviour or work we can inspire young people to aim higher. Here at Oaklands we have a school rewards system which awards individual Reward Points, House Points, stickers and praise postcards. Students are often rewarded for outstanding work, excellent effort, attendance or contribution to school life. In the last four years we developed a system of stars in their planners which could be redeemed in

the school shop for novelty gifts, sports accessories or scholastic items. Following a student survey last summer term, we have now introduced a new and modern online reward system which gives each student their own Reward Account, where they can see which tutor group or House is in the lead, where they can redeem their points in the online shop or donate them to charity. Staff award points electronically and students can see why they were awarded a point and by whom. But the system is not just about points – it also has the functionality to award Accolades (private praise messages), or to reach Achievement Milestones for such things as Sports Day, extra-curricular activities, department challenges, House competitions etc. Staff also find it very convenient and flexible as they find it supports more consistency in their awarding of points; Heads of Year and Tutors also enjoy being able to give pastoral reward points. It gives us an immediate and “real time” snapshot of House and Student Points. We hope that this new system will highlight the motivation and commitment of our students and continue to build positive relationships between staff and students. Why not have a look at your child’s account and see how well they are doing?



Future Olympians Students

Finishing third in the league table of the London 2012 Olympics with 65 medals, 19 of them gold, it is safe to say that this year Great Britain has strived towards sporting excellence. Our nation watched on with pride and in awe as Mo Farah tearfully ran through the finishing line doing the "Mobot"; as Andy Murray triumphed at Wimbledon and as Sir Chris Hoy's sixth gold medal was placed around his neck. Just around the corner in Weymouth we witnessed Ben Ainslie collecting his fourth gold medal in sailing and following on in his footsteps Oaklands Sixth Form has its own sailors who will be dominating our sporting headlines in the future; Vikki Payne, Chris Cowan and Anthony Parke.

Vikki Payne – studying A Levels in Geography, Biology and PE - describes sailing as "enthalling and exciting as it keeps you on your toes and the conditions are always different. I get to visit some amazing places such as Lake Garda and I really value the freedom sailing allows you to have". As well as training most weekends and going to the gym five times a week she also coaches sailing at her local sailing club. Vikki has recently competed in the World Championships in Germany, qualifying for the Gold Fleet by finishing second out of the Youth Females. However, Vikki says she does not get nervous before big events! Her A Levels should be taking her to a top university next summer where she will study Sports Science.



Also amongst the young talent here at Oaklands Catholic Sixth Form who is destined to dominate, is Anthony Parke. Anthony, who studies AS Levels in Geography, Chemistry, Maths and Economics, explains how "Travelling is the main reason I enjoy sailing, competing in places such as Holland, Germany, Belgium and Ireland. I have also competed in the World Championships in San Francisco finishing second in the under 16s and fourteenth in the under 18s." First boarding a dinghy when he was only six months old, it is no surprise that Anthony went on to win his first competition when he was just five - I think it is safe to say that Anthony was born a sailor!



Another sailor you can say "AHOY!" to as you walk through the Sixth Form block is Chris Cowan presently taking AS Levels in Physics, Product Design and Geography. Chris joined us from Porchester Community College in September this year and began his sailing career at the age of ten by sailing at his local club. "My family have influenced my interest in sailing as they also sail yachts," says Chris "and living just five minutes away from my sailing club I find it very accessible." Like Vikki, he also sails a 29er, competing in places such as Wales and recently in Holland finishing in a very impressive eleventh place in the World Championships.

Despite all this training, commitment and travelling Chris assures me that he still manages to finish his college work at the deadlines – now that's impressive time management!

By Hannah Dawson

International Students

It is October and it seems the weather has turned for good.

Most students have settled back into the familiar rhythm of Oaklands school life. But for our European students this change could not have been easy. In the Sixth Form we have the pleasure of playing host to several students as part of a partnership with the Interstudies Exchange Programme.

At home in England

Carliyn from Holland has found "everything" her favourite aspect of life in England and feels at home here. One of the reasons she has come to England is the cost of schooling in Holland and with all the uproar about the rise in tuition fees still fresh in our ears it reminds us how lucky we really are with the education system we have. Johan from Denmark loves our small but great Drama department and it is heartening that he will miss England when he returns home. Marco says the food does not compare but, as the son of a successful Italian chef, is that hardly surprising? Interviewing him last Friday made me think back to the first day of school when I first talked to him and it is astounding how much his English has improved in just two short months.

Curriculum better here

The other students feel they too have either improved their English or their confidence in speaking. Both Marco and Italian born Alice (Al-y-chay) prefer the 4 subject system of A-Levels over their own 13/14 subject curriculum as they feel they can concentrate on what they do best. In Marco's case Maths, which he finds "easy". We are glad

to hear the students fully appreciate the resources we have here; the abundance of computers and the "better, younger" teachers.

We are also a school to more long term foreign students. Ishmael Sadler came to England nine years ago and has grown from being "scared of all the white people"

to the outgoing and constantly exciting young man we all know and love. He is happy being a citizen here and will stay for the long term although for him Zimbabwe will always be home.

Freedom and support

In-between perspectives have come from Dan who has been here for 2 years. Like Ishmael, Dan moved from Zimbabwe. He finds people here much friendlier and senses the atmosphere of the country is freer. Dan believes that in addition to the great support he receives from his parents and the opportunities available to him, he will be successful in his pursuit of becoming a great sportsman.



When asked about the difference in religion and whether he prefers the more vocal expressions of faith associated with African churches, he states that it is irrelevant as faith is a personal thing and not heavily influenced by the atmosphere in which it is communicated.

All the students are finding school life comfortably challenging and have expressed that the worst part of being a student is the same worldwide – homework.

Iszy Muwanga Year 13

Quite a jump Student

I can say with confidence that everything they tell you is true; the jump from GCSE to A level is huge. A Levels are nothing like GCSEs and you will hear constantly before you join and again at the start of the year that you will need to take responsibility for your own learning. In preparation for university, teachers expect you to be more independent; it is a mixture of hard work and determination. But what you put in is what you get out at the end so as soon as you begin the course the hard work starts. This is why A Levels are so hard.

It is also important to say that college life at Oaklands Sixth Form is amazing, as you meet new people who have joined from other schools or other countries and you get to know Sixth Form students from last year really well because of the forms being mixed. Sixth Form is one part of my life that I do not think I will ever forget and one which I will never look back on in disappointment.

Gill Glover - Year 12



at the heart of connecting
people to higher education

It's that time of the year again; the tension is rising, the sweat pouring and sleep is being lost. Many Year 13 and 14 students will be writing, checking and re-checking their UCAS application especially their Personal Statement section. The dreaded blank page where you must write about the skills, abilities and qualities that will make an admissions tutor choose you. It's a time of rising expectations, high drama, and thrilling tensions.

While writing this, my personal statement has already been done and dusted, only yesterday did I press the 'send' button. However, whilst mine is completed many people are still fretting over their application. So having asked a number of Sixth Form students for advice on applying to university, I've collated a top 10 of tips for all those going through the UCAS process:

1. Be prepared to do many Personal Statement drafts!

Having spoken to a number of people, most of us don't even submit their final statement until at least their sixth draft. So don't worry too much if you're re-drafting the statement. After all it's only going to get better.

2. Be truthful

This is a big one. Lying in your personal statement can have huge consequences with UCAS and the university you are thinking of applying to. Even exaggerating the truths may affect you negatively if you are asked about it in an interview.

3. Don't plagiarise!

UCAS have a complex software system that checks to see if you've copied anybody else's. If you have.... you're in trouble!!

4. Research!!

Not only research the universities you are thinking of applying to, but the course content. It may seem like a no-brainer but I've come across people who don't even know what their course involves!

5. Get work experience

Nothing can strengthen a UCAS application more than work experience in your chosen field. Not only does it give you experience but it also conveys your passion and enthusiasm to the admissions tutor.

6. Be aware of your deadlines

For those applying to Oxbridge, Medicine, Den-

tistry and Veterinary courses. Your application is due in Mid October this is different to all the others applications for which the UCAS deadline is mid January, but the school deadline is mid November.

7. Plan in advance

You don't want to be one of those candidates who is rushing around like a headless chicken trying to get their application done a day before the deadline. Remember the earlier you submit it the less you have to worry about. After we press 'send', our tutors have to write a lengthy persuasive reference for us. If they have twelve to do you may be waiting a while. So don't press the button and expect a UCAS response the next day!

8. Show People!

Don't just read it yourself. Get as many views from as many different people as possible. Don't be afraid to nag friends, family, colleagues and even other teachers to read your statement. After all two heads are better than one.

9. Save your work!

Again it may seem obvious, but many people have to had to re-write statements simply due to the fact that they hadn't pressed the 'save' button. So just press 'save' and it'll save you plenty of hassle.

10. Have Fun.

Whilst applying to UCAS may not seem like fun, it is your future you are talking about, so enjoy it.

So there you have it, the top ten UCAS experiences and advice given by Year 13 students at Oaklands Sixth Form October 2012!

Learning Support

Does your child have additional learning needs? If so, would you like to meet with our SENCO and members of the Learning Support Department? We can discuss your child's needs and explore possible support strategies.

We are holding a SEN Parents' Evening on **Wednesday 14th November**, with 15 minute bookable appointments available between 4 pm and 6.30 pm. Please ring our Learning Support Department on 02392 259214 ext 233 to book an appointment.

Oaklands Christmas Ball

Friday December 14th 2012

8 pm - midnight

Tickets, priced £22, will be on sale shortly and will include a gourmet two course meal, a live band — Kojak's Revenge and DJ.

All Staff, Parents and Sixth Formers are warmly invited to attend

CAFOD Fundraising

On 28th October a number of staff and students from Oaklands took part in the Great South Run, a gruelling 10 mile race for which they have been training hard. They represented CAFOD and were wearing CAFOD T-shirts. The money they raise in sponsorship will go towards supporting the work of CAFOD some of which will go towards helping to build the fantastic sports and community hall in Korogocho that is now well underway. If you would like to sponsor them for this event, then please follow the link below for the Virgin Giving website <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Cafod2012> or send a donation into the school clearly marked as 'Sponsor ship for Great South Run, CAFOD 2012'

Key Dates

Term Dates 2012/2013

Autumn Term 2012

Monday 3rd September to Friday 21st December

Spring Term 2013

Monday 7th January to Thursday 28th March

Half Term:

Monday 18th—Friday 22nd February

Summer Term 2013

Monday 15th April—Tuesday 23rd July

Half Term:

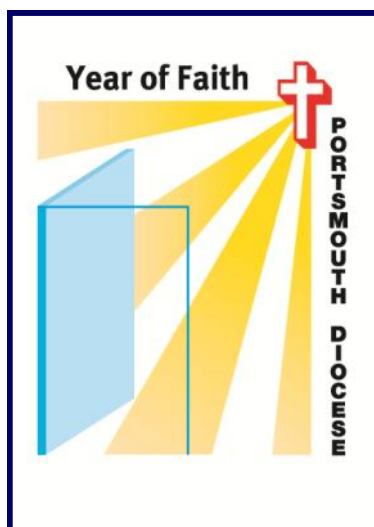
Monday 27th—Friday 31st May

Inset Days

The school will be closed on the following days: Friday 21st December 2012 and Monday 22nd July and Tuesday 23rd July 2013.

Events

08/11/12	Sixth Form Open Evening
12/11/12	Year 7 Academic Mentoring Week
14/11/12	SEN Parents' Evening
15/11/12	Year 8 Parents' Evening
17/11/12	OPA Craft Fayre
22/11/12	Year 9 Parents' Evening
27/11/12	Peripatetic Music Concert (7pm)
29/11/12	Year 12 Consultation Afternoon
05/12/12	Christmas Music Concert
14/12/12	Oaklands Christmas Ball
18/12/12	Christmas Carol Service
20/12/12	Last day of Term for Students
21/12/12	Inset Day—School Closed
07/01/13	First day of term
10/01/13	Presentation of Certificates Eve.
31/01/13	Year 11 Parents' Evening
18.02.13-	Half Term
22.02.13	
28/02/13	Year 9 Courses Information Eve.
11/03/13	School Production 'Wizard of Oz'
12/03/13	School Production 'Wizard of Oz'
13/03/13	SEN Parents' Evening
	School Production 'Wizard of Oz'
21/03/13	Years 12/13 Parents' Evening



As I am sure many of you are aware, Pope Benedict announced a Year of Faith which began on 11th October 2012 and ends on 24th November 2013. This event marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

The Council attempted to address the relationship between the Catholic Church and the modern world, a world that now bears little resemblance to that which our children will inherit. To say I was expert on the documents of the second Vatican council would be overstating the case, however, I studied those that related to Catholic education during my Masters, in particular the *Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis)*. At the time I was a busy Assistant Headteacher working in a Catholic school in Hertfordshire, so thankfully it is one of the shorter documents of the Council.

Vatican II was arguably a defining moment in the Catholic Church as it drew a line under the past and the 'door was opened' to let the modern world through. Vatican II served, in many ways as a vehicle for change, within the Catholic church and Catholic education. 50 years on the relevance of this important Vatican document on education is worth exploring, albeit in some brevity.

The declaration on Christian Education marked "an important advance in the way a Catholic school is thought of: the transition from the school as an institution to the school as a community"¹. For many institutions this has found its way into the school's DNA evident in ethos and Mission Statements, not least ours: Community Unity Opportunity.

At the time of Vatican II, many schools may

have seen the transition from institution to community as little more than a change of emphasis. Since Vatican II, particularly in the last 20 years, unprecedented changes in society and technology has redefined the notion of our community to which Catholic schools must respond.

Although not altogether very scientific, I asked a number of Year 10 students to define community. Social networking and on-line gaming, reign supreme. "I belong to a community of 500 friends on Facebook", one student proudly told me. The traditional answers were little more than a foot-

note. This suggests that community no longer fits into a traditional package. Without realising it their definition is influenced by the march of secularisation, multiculturalism and pluralism, for which many would have found difficult to predict 50 years ago; a society that often promotes the individual as absolute, espoused through social media; a culture that values the virtues of celebrity, commercialisation and commoditisation. Whilst I am not suggesting all of this is negative, I would argue that for young people this has reordered the hierarchy of influences relegating the school as community to mid position on the starting grid.

So, 50 years on if we are to respond to the transition from the school as an institution to the school as a community, what action should Catholic schools take when faced with such innovation and change?

At Oaklands we are going to focus on three areas, and I would encourage other Catholic schools to do the same during this Year of Faith. Firstly, 'zone in' on the importance of developing a community of faith, to do this schools must focus on Witness. Of Witness Pope Paul VI once said, 'Today young people



¹. Congregation for Catholic Education, *the Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic School*, Rome 1988. no31

do not listen seriously to teachers, but to witnesses; and if they do listen to teachers it is because they are witnesses'. These witnesses are often counter cultural, the best of them communicate in the vernacular common to our youngsters. They are living witnesses, relevant to youngsters who have demonstrated that there are alternatives to the values being adopted by parts of society. Second, a re-energising of the tri part community that is home, school and parish. In particular that shared understanding that all

three parties have a responsibility for education, including those who may not regularly attend Church or who have been disenfranchised from the church for some reason. Finally, a reaffirming from the teaching community that education is one of the most sacred things that we can engage in with young people; the word education comes from the Latin *educare* which means to lead forth. It is this leading in the light of Christ that etches knowledge, understanding and values on the souls of young people.

Congratulations

Congratulations and well done to former student Charlotte May who attended Oaklands from 1997 – 2002 and has recently achieved a first in Art and Graphics from London Metropolitan University.

Oaklands Parents' Association (OPA)

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE – Saturday 17 November 2012, 12.00 to 3.00pm

This is our biggest fundraiser and will soon be upon us. The Craft Fayre is a popular event and has gained a reputation within the community as an excellent place for buying that special item and is an ideal place to get that unique Christmas present. We will have a games area so that the children can enjoy the day too, as well as a winter barbecue and a range of refreshments on sale. If you are interested in booking a table for this event, please contact Amanda Peach on 02392 256083. Please come along and support us; bring all your friends and family too for a great day out.

Can you donate items for the Craft Fayre? We need donations of bottles, alcoholic or non-alcoholic (alcoholic donations should be brought to Reception by parents only). We also need donations of chocolates and toiletries and any other items that you think would make suitable raffle prizes. All donations, big or small, will be gratefully received.

Raffle tickets have been sent home for the Grand Draw for you to purchase or sell to family and friends. Please purchase these if you can. Any unsold tickets should be returned to the school intact.

Nearly New Uniform

Oaklands Parents' Association are eager to increase their stock of uniform to sell and would welcome any donations of freshly laundered uniform. Any items can be left for the attention of Mrs Brettell at Reception or Student Services. If you would like to make an enquiry about purchasing nearly new uniform please send an email to: uniform@oaklands.hants.sch.uk and a member of the OPA will contact you.

50/50 Draw:

June: 1 st prize: No. 130, E. Holford, £100.	2 nd prize: No. 94, O'Rourke, £25.
July: 1 st prize: No. 111, Baxter, £100.	2 nd prize: No. 223, Lyster, £25.
August: 1 st prize: No. 145, Bing, £100.	2 nd prize: No. 41, George Mudford, £50.
Sept: 1 st prize: No. 78, E. Hine, £100.	2 nd prize: No. 59, Cathy McGlinchy, £50.
October: 1 st prize: No. 235 Jo Welton, £100.	2 nd prize: No. 266, H. Hogg, £50.

Oaklands Parents Association

Christmas Craft Fayre



Saturday 17th November

Lots



12.00 until 3.00

of Fun and Games

Grand Draw



Oaklands School Band and Choir

Christmas Crafts

Over 60 different craft tables

Winter BBQ Refreshments

Craft tables available £12 call 02392 256083

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