

Comenius Trip Update

No 403 Dec 15

Oaklands News

YOUCEE Conference

**An Author Visits
Oaklands Remembers**



A publication for
Oaklands Catholic School
and Sixth Form College



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Oaklands

Catholic School and Sixth Form College

From the Headteacher's desk

One of the traditions we have this time of year is purchasing the bumper Christmas edition of the Radio Times. Over the weekend I thumbed through to the film reviews. Mixed in amongst the usual festive delights are a number of 'super hero' movies. When the world needs to be saved, who do you call on? Super heroes are in the business of saving the world, the planet or just about anything else that needs to be saved. Super hero characters are larger than life, they have the ability to dodge whatever is shot at them, they leap tall buildings, they can be invisible, they can fly. Criminals, monsters and aliens are terrorized by their presence. When we think of super heroes, words like humble, gentle and loving do not come to mind. We want someone who is powerful and dynamic to save anything that needs saving.

Well, make no mistake there is certainly plenty going on that suggests we need saving; issues in Ukraine and the Middle East dominate headlines alongside the Ebola crisis in West Africa. With the world in such desperate shape, you would think that God would send a super hero. A super hero with pants on the outside of his tights is unlikely, but why not a powerful, charismatic leader who could wield power wisely and crush God's enemies?

If it were up to most of us to save the world, we'd send a super hero who was larger than life, who was overpowering, who displayed mighty acts and who would offer true punishment to those deserving it. That's what super heroes do to save the world.

But God does not work the way we do. God's ways are not our ways. Rather than send a powerful hero into the world, he sent his only son to humbly and gently love us and forgive us.

Jesus' birth as a defenceless baby started a sequence of events that would lead to his death and resurrection and our salvation.

During the Christmas season, it is worth exploring God's plan for saving the world and what we can learn from it. First, consider that God's ways are not our ways, he will work in our lives in ways that do not make sense; we must trust him. Second, if we truly are striving to be like Christ and grow in the love of God then we must look at how God chose to save us, with humility when dealing others, with gentleness in relationships, loving those who we find difficult to love and offering forgiveness to those who hurt us. God chose a strange way to save the world, but it's the perfect pattern for building a better future.

Busy term

For students sitting GCSEs or A levels next May, almost half of the academic year has now gone, so for these youngsters the term has been particularly busy. For GCSE we have set ourselves the ambitious target of 80% and for A level 100%. A significant number of students will be sitting internal examinations shortly after the Christmas break. It is important that these go well. The secret to this is thorough and comprehensive revision over the holiday. Many students have participated in the extra



schools and the information exchange in the primary school playground.

At the beginning of the year in the first edition of the Oaklands News the school issued a calendar containing all the events from Parents' Evenings through to social events. With each subsequent issue we also highlight important dates over the next term.

This term we have been through a process to refresh our website. Feedback from parents suggested that they wanted easy access to upcoming events. We have also started a section providing links to key letters sent home to parents. The site will continue to develop over the coming months.

Internal examinations

On 8th January the school will host the Presentation of Certificates Evening. Unfortunately, David Willetts MP is now unable to attend, he was booked over a year ago but parliamentary business has resulted in a cancellation. However, we have managed to secure Ann Widdecombe. If you have a son or daughter in last year's Year 11 or last year's Year 13 you should have received an invitation. If you require further details please contact the school office.

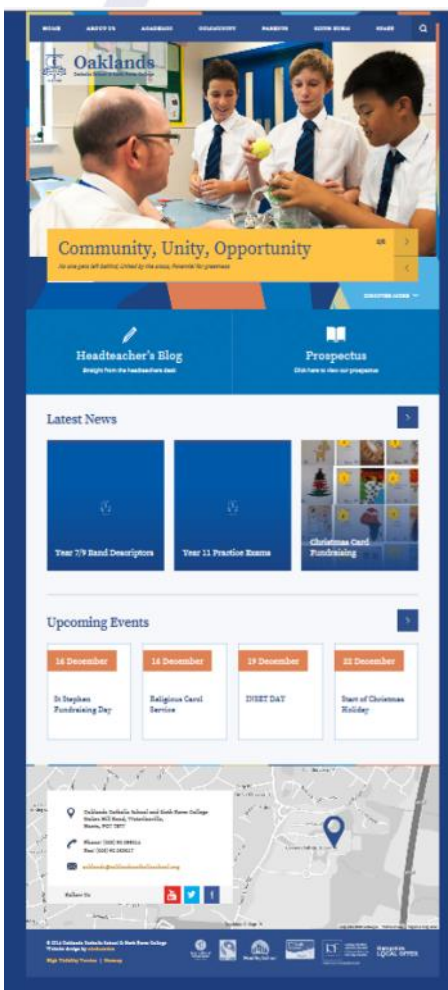
Finally, may I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and I look forward to welcoming students back at the normal time on **Tuesday 6th January**. Matthew Quinn

Matthew Quinn

curricular life of the school. There have been many sporting fixtures, trips and visits. The school has also been involved in a number of community initiatives locally and within the parish. On 8th November a group of students represented the school at the profession of John Paul Lyttle at St John's Cathedral a few days before his ordination into the Deaconate.

Too much or too little or just about right?

Communication between home and school continues to be a 'hot topic'. Some parents say there is too much, particularly when a message is reinforced via email, text and letter. Others say there is too little, particularly when making the comparison with the experience in the primary



Consultation on Admissions Arrangements September 2016

As required by regulations the Catholic Academy Trust Company in Havant operating as the Local Governing Body of Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Waterlooville will be conducting a consultation on its proposed admissions arrangements for the school year 2016 – 2017. The consultation period runs for a minimum period of 8 weeks from 9 December 2014 until 17 February 2015.

Copies of the proposed arrangements can be obtained from the school office or downloaded from the school website www.oaklands.hants.sch.uk.

Comments on the arrangements should be sent to the clerk to the Governing Body by 27 February 2015. Email C.Colley@oaklandscatholicschool.org

The Governing Body will consider all comments received before determining its admission arrangements by 15 April 2015.

Havant Pastoral Area Christmas Masses

Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Peter the Apostle, Waterlooville

Christmas Eve:

4.15pm Children's Mass
6.00pm Carol Singing.
6.45pm Mass with carols
8.30pm Mass with carols
Midnight Mass (preceded by Adoration,
confessions, Christmas music & readings
from 11.20pm, followed by mince pies and
mulled wine in the parish centre)

Christmas Day:

10.30am Mass with carols
12.15pm Said Mass.

St. Patrick's, Hayling Island

Christmas Eve:

5.30pm Children's Mass
8pm Christmas Mass

Christmas Day:

Mass at 10am.

St. Joseph's, Havant

Christmas Eve:

11.30pm, carols followed by Mass at
midnight

Christmas Day:

11.00am Mass

Ss. Thomas', Emsworth

Christmas Eve: 5.30pm, carols followed by
Vigil Mass

Christmas Day: 9.00am Mass

St. Edmund's, Horndean

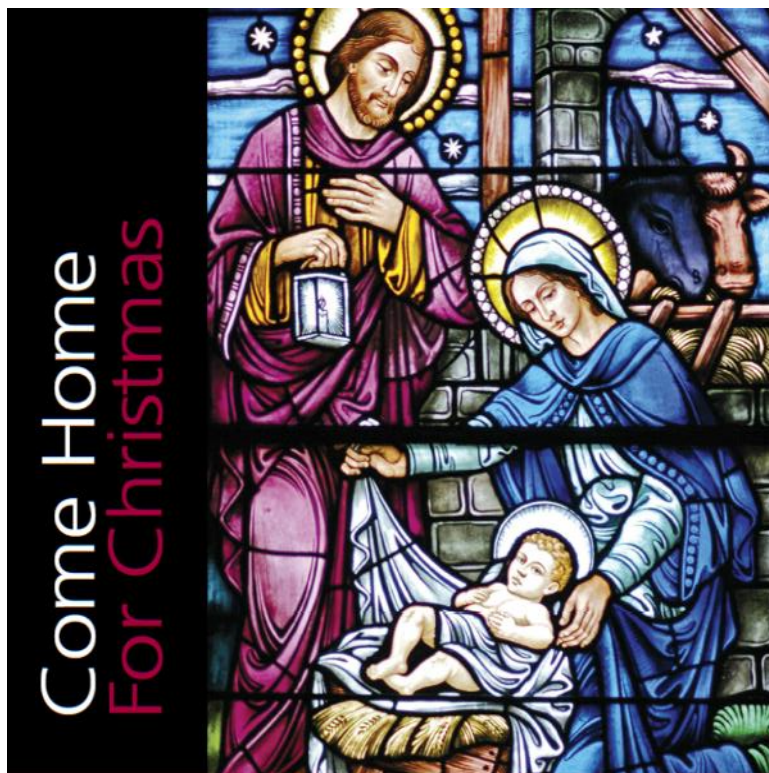
Christmas Eve: Midnight Mass with
readings and carols from 11pm

Christmas Day: Mass at 8.30am and
10.30am

St. Michael and All Angels, Leigh Park


Christmas Eve: Children's Mass 6.00pm.
Carols at 9.00pm followed by Mass at
9.30pm

Christmas Day: Mass at 10.00am



**Come Home
For Christmas**

Come Home For Christmas is an initiative of the Catholic Church which aims to offer a seasonal welcome to Catholics who for different reasons no longer or rarely attend Mass. Whatever your story or journey, the door is open for you.



John 1:5
flame 2
National Youth Congress 2015

For more information see Mrs Floyd

Wembley Arena
7th March 2015

Year 10 to Young Adult

cymfed.org.uk/flame2

Wembley Arena

CYM FED
CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY FEDERATION

Remembrance Day in Havant

Remembrance Sunday. A big day for many. A day where we remember the men and women who gave their lives for their country and those who risk their lives every day, giving their today to secure our tomorrow.

These men and women go almost unnoticed in our communities yet they alone create more of an impact than ten of us combined.

I went to the memorial service in Havant to sadly find that I was the only one representing Oaklands in school uniform. I felt that wearing my uniform was necessary as we were going to a memorial service so it was not suitable to wear a tracksuit.

This is my second year at the Havant memorial service proudly wearing the school's uniform to show that I do care about the sacrifices made by people all over the world to keep the peace that we should all be trying to create in our lives to make other people's lives easier.

Danny Brain 10 St. Margaret



An Author Comes to Oaklands

On Friday 21st November some students from Oaklands and several other schools were lucky enough to meet the one and only Colin R. Parsons, a highly popular children's writer. We got to spend the whole day with him!

We all really enjoyed listening to him telling us about what several of his books are about. We found many exciting things out about him and we had the opportunity to buy some of his books. Most of all we enjoyed him helping us write our own stories called 'DEATH TRAP'. We really enjoyed being able to meet a real author and luckily for us we got to take selfies with him. BONUS! I think it was helpful for him to come in and visit us because we got many phenomenal tips and tricks from him and, most importantly, he opened up my imagination more! I am very thankful for this opportunity!

Structure of the day:

- Meet the author! We gathered with other schools in the Library and Colin did a very funny presentation for us.
- An introduction to the writing task. Death Trap!
- Top tips and advice from Colin.
- Time to start writing!
- In the afternoon, representatives from each school shared their work and received feedback from the author.
- Book signing.
- Quiz time! Can you guess the answer?
- Question and answer session with all schools present.
- 2.45pm: Primary schools depart and students from Oaklands get to ask even more questions that we had been desperate to ask, including how to become a writer.
- Time for photographs! We even took selfies with Colin!

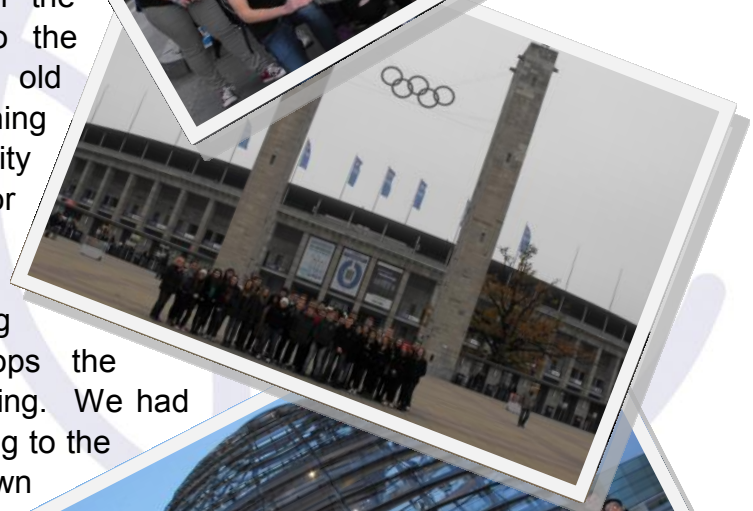
By Adelaide Sissons - 7 St. Vincent



Sixth Form History Trip to Berlin

During the October half term, a group of 36 Sixth Form students went on a visit to Berlin to investigate historical sites and museums associated with Weimar, Nazi and post-war Germany. We flew from Gatwick to Berlin on the last day of the half term, and in total spent four nights in the German capital. The visits started straight away with a trip to a nuclear bunker beneath a shopping centre which was built to house 2200 people but which thankfully was never used! Our first morning was spent on a sightseeing coach and walking tour with a fantastic local guide who told us all about the history of this important city from 1918 to 1989.

We visited places such as Sachsenhausen concentration camp, the second one established by the Nazis, and the Wansee House, where a meeting was held in January 1942 to organise the genocide of the Jews. Our group also went to an excellent museum on resistance to the Nazi government and an exhibition on the history of German politics right up to the modern day, which is housed in an old cathedral. We also saw the last remaining large section of the Berlin Wall in the city centre, which now hosts an outdoor exhibition on the SS, as well as walking to the famous Checkpoint Charlie. We also had the wonderful experience of visiting the enormous glass dome which tops the Bundestag, the German Parliament building. We had great views over the city and whilst walking to the top of the dome were able to look down upon the Parliament chamber. As well as all this history, though, we had time to go shopping on Kurfurstendam, Berlin's main commercial boulevard and over the three evenings we relaxed in welcoming traditional German restaurants, café terraces in the centre of Berlin and had our final evening meal at the Hard Rock Café. The trip was really busy and full of activities, but had the right mixture of study and enjoyment. It gave us a great opportunity to see one of Europe's most exciting capital cities and led us to a greater understanding of a really important time in history which affected the whole world during the last century. We would like to thank Mr Cunningham, Mrs Cunningham and Mr Tyler who put such time and effort into organising the trip, and wish them good luck for the next one in October 2016!



Comenius Trip November 2014

Day 1

On the first day, we arrived at school with our suitcases and went to the first two lessons; we then met up with everyone else and got ourselves into the coach. The journey to the airport was a good laugh with all our friends and was exciting for all of us. When we got to the airport, again we had a good time looking around the shops and it was nice to have some freedom to do what we wanted to do. The plane journey was good and when we landed in Turin airport we were all a bit nervous as our families were picking us up from arrivals. We got there and we met our families. It was a little awkward to start with but we got in the cars and went back to their houses and settled in - the families were all welcoming. By



Megan, Tayah and Jess



Day 2

On the second day we met at the school at 8:00 after waking up at 6:30 and recycled waste for an hour. After that, we made the 10 min walk from the school to the castle nearby. Unfortunately, it was raining on the second day but we still managed to have fun. After a short speech in the theatre of the castle, we headed off to look around the contemporary art museum inside the castle. Our group was split into two so whilst one looked around, the other group made prints of leaves and nature using a

screen print as a memory of our trip. In the evening, we went back to our families and ate dinner before heading out on a trip with our families. By Annie and Helena

Day 3

On Wednesday we took the 40min journey into Turin (the nearest town) by coach. We split into two groups and visited two local landmarks. First we visited 'Palazzo Barolo' a 16th century building with brilliant architecture and spectacular ceiling paintings. Then we explored Turin: a large city that at one point was considered to be the capital of Italy. After finishing a truly Italian pizza we went onto the next activity the 'Museo del Risorgimento'. We had an interesting presentation about the formation of Italy in a building originally built to be the parliamentary house for what was thought was going to be the capital of Italy. In the evening I met my partner's family and a very friendly dog. There was always a friendly and family based atmosphere.



By David

Day 4

On the fourth day we caught the bus to school or got driven in. We spent the morning in the computer suite and created posters about the code of conduct in our schools. Then we designed a Comenius project code of conduct. Other groups did different things for example, environmental research or finding out about the Italian constitution. We spent the afternoon with our partners. Some groups went to town, some people stayed at home. We all met in the evening to show our parents the things we had been working on. After that most people met together with people from other countries and went out. Ben, Jonah and Adam



Day 5

This was the last day of our Comenius trip to Italy. In the morning we went to Turin and did a bit of sightseeing and shopping. We had a delicious lunch in the town centre and then said our 'goodbyes' to our host families. It was a very busy and enjoyable week. We were able to work with students from four different countries and exchange ideas on the human rights issue. We also learnt about the Italian history and culture and started new friendships. Hopefully, we will be able to meet again during the next Comenius meeting in the UK.

One World Week Coffee Morning

On 22nd October the Fairtrade Club at Oaklands went along to the Sacred Heart and St. Peter the Apostle Church in Waterlooville for the One World Week Coffee Morning accompanied by Mrs J Smith. After a presentation by the Mayor of Havant, Cllr Marjorie Smallcorn, the group talked about what they do at Oaklands to promote Fairtrade. "We run a Fairtrade stall every Friday lunchtime selling chocolate and snacks and also Fairtrade coffee and tea. Every year during Fairtrade fortnight we present Fairtrade in assemblies to all years and meet and interview speakers who come to Oaklands to talk about Fairtrade." The group comprises: Imogen Glover, Nicole Templeman, Jessica Collins and



Mollie Hale. "We met the Mayor of Havant and we talked about what we do at Oaklands for Fairtrade. Everyone was interested and very friendly and we helped to put up posters about what schools in Hampshire are doing to promote Fairtrade. It was good fun but I felt a bit nervous when we were doing the presentation. It was good to see what other people in Hampshire are doing to promote Fairtrade."

Oaklands Remembers Truce of 1914

On an exceptionally cold winter's day, the guns fell silent, letters home were composed and in places, hymns were sung. Slowly, heads began to appear out of the trenches and men would steadily make their way into No Man's Land to greet one another and share small gifts. In some places a game of football broke out and once again the British and Germans had become rivals in a fierce competition. The date was 25th December 1914 and the First World War was five months old. The war was supposed to be over but instead a stalemate had ensued and the soldiers on all sides had resorted to digging and living in trenches.

As part of the Football Associations, 'Football Remembers' project to commemorate this momentous occasion 100 years ago, students in Year 9 did their part by taking part in an inter-form competition in the week commencing 8th December. Regardless of ability or gender, huge numbers of students flocked to the Sports Hall to take part in the 5-a-side competition and for those who elected not to play, came along to cheer their forms and favourites on to Oaklands' glory.



After the trials and tribulations of a difficult group stage, the final was set for 9 St. Catherine to play 9 St. Teresa on Friday 12th December 2014. In a pulsating game that ebbed and flowed it was inevitable that the game would come down to penalties with a result of 3-3. After 5 penalties and two misses each it came down to who would miss first. On the eighth penalty, it was St. Catherine who missed and with St. Teresa scoring it was they who were the winners.

Congratulations to 9 St. Teresa on their victory but congratulations and thank you to everyone who got involved in Year 9, whether they were players or supporters and took the time to participate in this

SVP Christmas Party

We invited the people from the Cowplain Age Concern Centre over to Oaklands for a Christmas party.

In the lead up to it we created a fun quiz for the elderly to complete and made lots of decorations for the room (with help from Rebecca Barrows). After lots of lunchtimes packed with snowflake designing, the decorations were ready and all we needed were the elderly to arrive.

So on Tuesday 2nd December members of the Site Team kindly drove the minibus to transport our guests. Mr Lewis, an ex-teacher from Oaklands also helped out by telling some funny stories and playing carols and old time songs for the old people to join in with.



We served tea, coffee and mince pies which everyone enjoyed. Then came the quiz the people from Age Concern really enjoyed themselves and we even had to go to a tie break.

At the end of the afternoon everyone had had a lovely time and were sad to go. But it's not the end because we will carry on visiting them at the Age Concern Centre every Tuesday lunchtime.

Rebecca Galbraith & Lily Ellis (10 St. Teresa)

YOUCEE Conference, Arnhem, Holland

On Sunday 17th September 1944, approximately 10,000 men of the 1st British Airborne and 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade began three consecutive days of landing outside the town of Arnhem, Holland. A similar number of men from both the American 82nd and 101st Airborne landed on the outskirts of Nijmegen and Eindhoven respectively. On the seventieth anniversary of this military operation, five students from the Sixth Form travelled to Holland in order to pay their respects and to take part in YOUCEE a student conference that saw schools from Holland, Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom.

The first full day in Arnhem coincided with the anniversary of the first drop itself so it was with great excitement that on a sunny and warm day, we got onto the coach and began the tour of the Arnhem Battlefield. The tour itself largely followed the route taken by a



small number of soldiers in order to reach the road bridge at Arnhem but at each stop we listened intently as the guide, Ruud, patiently described aspects of the battle, reasons for the failure of the British and Polish soldiers as well as their withdrawal across the River Driel 10 days after the start of the battle. In the afternoon, students visited the Hartenstein Hotel Museum in Oosterbeek, which, during the battle, served as the British Headquarters.



With our accommodation being at a current serving army barracks, it came as little surprise that when not on the tour of the battlefields or at the museum, students were put through a series of physical and mental challenges by the army in order to develop their team skills or were provided the time to work on their cases for United Nations Conference they would take part in later in the week.

Throughout the

conference students were encouraged to look at the Second World War and 21st Century from different perspectives of their own country which concluded in the students representing Russia in the ARMUN (Arnhem Mock United Nations). During the day, students debated several topical issues and attempted to create resolutions on a wide range of topics including the raising of a minimum wage, defining civilians in a war zone, migration as well



as attempting to see if they could have prevented a Second World War through the Historical Reformed Society. Despite mixed results in their respective councils, all students agreed that they had enjoyed the challenge of taking the role of a specific country and arguing and debating in order to achieve the best results they could for their own country and the rest of the world.

Despite the immense fun and challenge of the conference all participants recognised that they were there to commemorate the men who landed in Arnhem and returned home as well as those that fell so immediately after the Conference students took part in the commemorations at the Bear Pit in the centre of Arnhem. The following day, one particular student, Erin Stott, was given the unique opportunity to take an official part in the commemorations for the Polish soldiers that were held at Driel. Along with a Dutch and Polish student, Erin took part in a reading of a poem written by a Polish veteran not only on live television but also in front of the Polish President and Dutch King, Despite the pressure, Erin did herself, the YOUCEE Conference and Oaklands proud in what was an emotional reading and ceremony.

Prior to our final departure from Arnhem, we all took part in the main ceremony at Oosterbeek Cemetery. In the final days of the battle, Oosterbeek became the focal point of the battle and in the years that followed, the

Commonwealth War Graves Commission buried soldiers, airmen and sailors buried the dead close the battlefield at Oosterbeek. On this particular day, all students of the conference joined local primary children in completing the tradition dating to the late 1940s of laying flowers on the graves of the fallen. During the ceremony, some students grateful received a British couple's family history and after further conversation it became apparent that this flight engineer had taken part in D-Day (helping to drop men close to Pegasus Bridge) as well as two other sorties to Arnhem before sadly, on his third crashing under enemy fire. He is now buried next to the rest of his crew members at Oosterbeek War Cemetery.

Sadly, after an action packed six days it was time for all to say their goodbyes and make their respective journey's home although thankfully, with the help of social media and modern technology all students have managed to remain in contact with each other. As one of only two schools from the United Kingdom to take part, all students felt privileged to have joined and would like to thank Oaklands, Mr Tyler and the YOUCEE Organisation for providing us with the opportunity to participate in YOUCEE 2014 and looking forward to hearing about the 2015 adventures.

Luke, Irvin, Erin, Grace and Nikki.

Off by Heart Poetry Competition

Recently, Year 7 and Year 8 took part in the 'Off by Heart Poetry Competition' that is held every year at Oaklands. It was my first time taking part and it was really fun and challenging!

One morning we were challenged by Miss Sharma to learn a poem of by heart and be able to perform it to the class and to Miss Sharma with good expression, pace and clarity in what we were saying. We would be assessed on how we engaged with the words of the poem and how effective our performance was. We were able to choose from a selection of poems including some from Walter De La Mare and even Shakespeare!

The poem that I chose was called 'Stepping Through the Woods on a Snowy Evening' and it was by the poet Robert Frost. The poem was four stanzas long and it was fun to learn. I enjoyed this poem because it reminded me of Christmas time and a snowy winter wonderland!

Our first performances were to the class and to Miss

Year 7 Winners

1st place - Lottie Piper

2nd place - Dobhilla Doppgima

Joint 3rd place - Aimee Joyce
and Charlotte Verney.

Year 8 Winners

1st place - Jude Ramsbottom

2nd place - Tim Price

Sharma. I was nervous to perform the poem to the class but once I got up and performed my poem I was fine and it all went well. I thankfully, remembered all of my lines! There were also, other students rehearsing the same poem as I was and I thought that they might be a little bit better than I was and get chosen but I guess that I was wrong. I did not expect to get to the finals because I knew that there were many other students in my class that also performed extremely well but I was lucky that Miss Sharma thought I was good enough and picked me as well as Hannah Ugboma and Victoria Allard.



"Your homework is to learn a challenging poem off by heart." What should I do? I thought! Then the bell rang and minutes later or so it felt, I was on Show My Homework site and had picked my poem! There were many poems from Shakespeare to The Listeners by Walter De La Mare. To my joy, the latter was the pick of the bunch and three weeks later, it was the big day! I took centre stage and performed! Then my friend, Adam performed his poem. We both got through!

The final was upon us! I was last, and so got to eye up the opposition post haste, whilst still reciting my poem. My heart was racing! Miss Sharma called my name and in the two minutes that followed I feel I gave a respectable performance!

Tim Price, was a Y8 winner. He said: "I'm so happy! As soon as I finish this book I'm going to get started on the books I've just won!"

By Tim Price.

Gifted English Students

As part of the English Enrichment Group's work, students have been looking closely at Creative Writing. Staff have led the last two creative writing sessions where students have been discovering their creative writing skills and enhancing their own critical thinking. Students have been taught about how creative writers use various techniques to get their ideas and thoughts flowing. Part of this has been looking at the use of still images, unpicking its meaning and placing our own interpretations on what is happening in the image.

One shining example was produced by Laura Vahey, Year 8



Rapidly, the skies closed in making the ship rock ferociously against the towering waves. The horses neighed in triumph. Soon, the sea and sky would go to war making the earth tremor with fear. Would there be anyone left? The sea grabbed at the chance and grew fearsomely close making the sky draw back. Soon, the battle would be over. The battle between good and evil. The battle which would make history. The battle for our lives...

The water took people from their lives, killing their trembling cold bodies slowly and nastily which made the whole world stand still with horror. The planets stopped. The moon stopped. Time stopped...

The angry sky had had enough. This bewildering, beautiful, bright light shone through the bitter sea waves showing their emptiness and heartlessness. The horses with hearts of fire cantered towards the lost waves making them drift back into the sea of stillness, comfort and grief. The glimmering sea made my heart pound with joy; I glimpsed into the hidden secrets of my mind. Someday, the world will end - a great war, loss, suffering and then, only then, will time stop.

SkillForce Award

As recognition for their hard work, dedication and team work River Jay Cain, Jasmin Bard and Shannon Chandler were chosen to receive the Prince's Award. In order to qualify for this prestigious award, the students had to take part in a local community project, involving giving up their own time as volunteers.

The Oaklands students took part in a project working at the WW1 Remembrance Centre at Bastian 6 in Hilsea. The students gave up their time to help the Museum Director and Patron to help renovate both the garden and the building as part of the WW1 celebrations.

The Prince's Award is sponsored by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Each of the students and their family attended a presentation evening at HMS Nelson to receive their awards. Mr Tindal also attended to receive a school award for all the help the school had given and for the other students that helped.



Farewells

At the end of this term we say thank you, good bye and good luck to four members of staff.

Sian Roberts has been working in a temporary capacity in the R.E, department since September during which time she has made a real impact with our students.

Martin Snelling has been working part time in our Art department for the past fifteen months sharing his wealth of knowledge and experience with our students.

Jill McCall has been our Director of Business and Finance for the past five years. During this time she has guided the school through its conversion to Academy status and, since then, has also played a pivotal role within the Diocese giving freely of her time to share her knowledge and experience with other schools following a similar path.

As many parents will know, due to various government initiatives, the way in which schools are now managed has changed enormously in recent years and are now run along normal business lines. As a result, Oaklands has had to manage a number of challenges brought about as a result of these initiatives and Jill has had the very difficult job of overseeing many of the necessary changes; utilising her expertise and professionalism to the full. We owe Jill a debt of gratitude for all that she has achieved and are very sorry to lose her. However, she leaves with our very best wishes for her new life in Devon.

Finally, **Kerry Jenkinson** has been part of the Admin Support Team for six years. Many parents will know Kerry as the friendly voice and mine of information and advice at the end of the telephone line. However, Kerry's main task was dealing with staff absence, including arranging cover for teachers absent from school; no mean feat when you consider we have almost two hundred people working at Oaklands. Kerry is also one of our 'star bakers' as many a waistline will testify! Not to mention her considerable talent as a flower arranger; her arrangements have adorned many an occasion at Oaklands. The world of estate agency now beckons for Kerry and we wish her well in this new venture.

As these colleagues all move on to pastures new, we thank them all for the huge contribution they have made to Oaklands and wish them well for the future.

Term Dates 2014/2015

Autumn Term 2014

Mon 1st September to Fri 19th December

Spring Term 2015

Mon 5th January to Thurs 2nd April

Half Term:

Mon 16th - Fri 20th February

Summer Term 2015

Mon 20th April to Mon 20th July

Half Term:

Mon 25th - Fri 29th May

INSET Days are as follows: Friday 19th December 2014, Monday 5th January and Monday 20th July 2015.

OPA Christmas Craft Fayre

A huge 'thank you' from the Parents' Association Committee to all parents, friends of the school, not to mention the stallholders themselves, for making this year's Christmas Craft Fayre on 15th November such a tremendous success.

We think you will agree that once again this year there was a huge variety of stalls all selling quality merchandise.

At the end of the day when all monies were accounted for a fantastic **£3,529.20** had been raised for the school.

The Craft Fayre takes a lot of organisation and it was gratifying to see so many people supporting the event. Thank you once again.

School Closures

A reminder that the school will be closed to students on **Friday 19th December 2014** and **Monday 5th January 2015**.

The school re-opens at the normal time on **Tuesday 6th January 2015**.

Gentle Reminders

Parents are reminded of the importance of all students keeping hydrated throughout the day and having their own **water bottles**. Bottles can be filled at various locations across the school site throughout the day.

With effect from the beginning of the Easter term, **paracetamol** will only be administered to students between 11.15 am and 2.40pm.

Bus Shelters on Oaklands Drive

Parents who visited the school during November will have seen some construction work taking place between the front gates and the roundabout on the school site. As a result of the School Travel Plan completed in the autumn term of 2013, the school was successful in receiving designated funding from the local authority to build three bus shelters. A survey of local residents revealed that the number of cars parking in nearby streets has steadily increased over the past 24 months as parents and carers collect children from all three of the schools along Stakes Hill Road. Subsequently, one aim of the Oaklands' School Travel Plan was to encourage more children who live within 5 miles of the school to swap car journeys for bus journeys at the start and end of the day and so reduce traffic congestion and pollution on Stakes Hill Road. It is especially hoped that more children will choose to take the bus home at the end of the day, and should the weather be inclement, the shelters will make waiting for the bus with friends more amenable. To help with the exit of school buses, parents are also reminded that they should not park on the school site before 3:35 and then try to leave before the buses depart. It is less time consuming and more environmentally friendly to arrive after 3:50pm if children do need to be collected in cars from the pick-up point, as by that time the buses have gone and the queues are reduced.

A polite request to those collecting their children by car who park in roads surrounding the school to park with consideration at all times. Yet again we have received complaints from our neighbours in Lombardy Rise about parents parking in their private car parks and blocking their driveways. Thank you.

Oaklands Alumni

Calling all ex Oaklands students. We would like you to join our Alumni; your experience could help and support our current students.

Don't delay, sign up today:

<http://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student/oaklandscatholic>



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