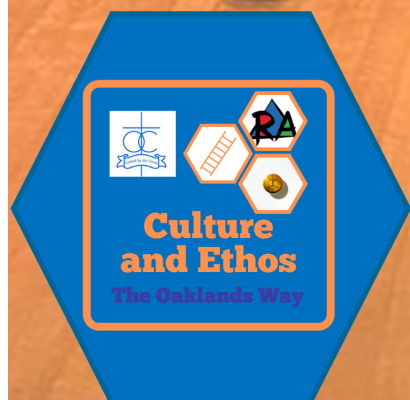
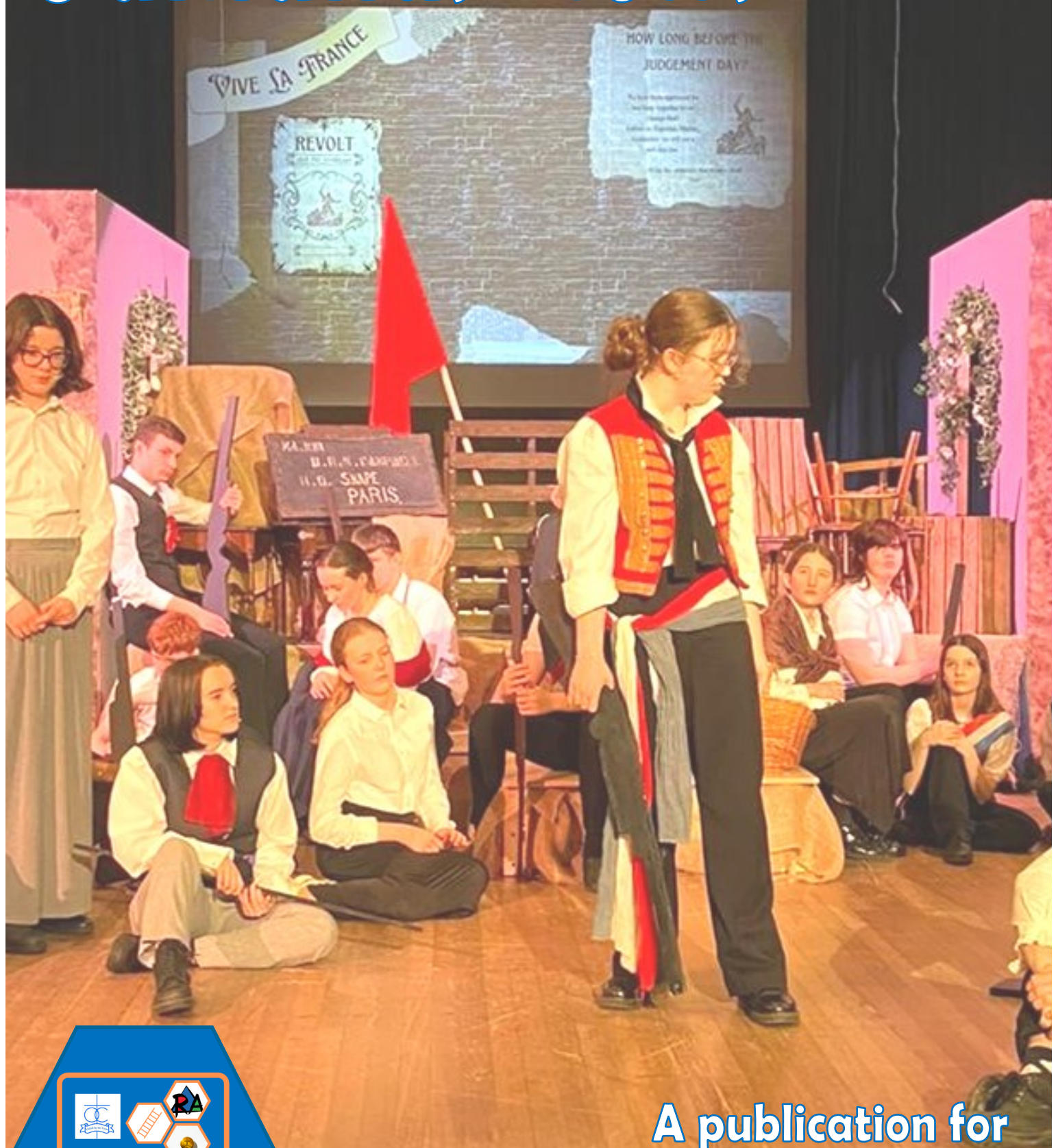


# Oaklands News

No 453  
March 2024



A publication for  
Oaklands Catholic School  
and Sixth Form College



# Oaklands

Catholic School and Sixth Form College

## From the Headteacher's Desk

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Earlier this week a student asked me why Easter was a movable feast. The origins of this can be found in the different calendars used by ancient Egyptians and Hebrews based on the movement of the sun. The Jews had one based on the phases of the moon, as Islam does, which is why the month of Ramadan moves around the calendar. The solar calendar was adopted by the Romans and the Christian culture to become the modern world's standard. Easter is one of the festivals which tries to harmonise the solar and lunar calendars.

As a general rule, Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon after 21<sup>st</sup> March. So, Easter Sunday can fall as early as 22<sup>nd</sup> March or as late as 25<sup>th</sup> April. This in turn has an impact on how the school year is divided up.

This year we are in school during Holy Week, the seven days leading up to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. One of the traditions of the week is the celebration of the Chrism Mass at the Diocesan Cathedral. It was a privilege to take a number of our confirmation students to the Mass to present the sacred oils.



Last week many of our students were able to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation or have a conversation with a priest. During Lent we have worked to support many good causes, caring and supporting those most in need and protecting the world, the Common Good, is part of our mission. Over Lent, asking students to make a small sacrifice is no bad thing. Although we probably will never be called to sacrifice our lives in such a dramatic way as Jesus did, St Paul reminds us that we are to be a 'living sacrifice' because of Jesus' death and resurrection. In this way through small actions of kindness and generosity, we will become more perfect and grow as Jesus' disciples.



There have been a number of significant achievements over recent weeks many of them are captured within this edition of the Oaklands News. The Year 9 Rugby team reached the final of the county cup and the three performances of Les Misérables demonstrated the talents of a large number of students; well done to all the artists, musicians, performers, technicians and back stage support. The time given over by staff is also beyond all expectation, over half term almost 250 students enjoyed residential experiences. The students were outstanding ambassadors for the school and their families. Then there are our Sixth Form students who have received their offers from universities, including Oxbridge. It is important that we recognise the success of our students and, of equal importance, the work that we do to facilitate and encourage this.

This is the last edition of the Oaklands news in this format. After Easter we will be moving to a shorter fortnightly web-based publication that will be emailed to parents and supporters. Twice a year we will produce a more substantial document.

Alongside this edition of the Oaklands News I have penned a letter to parents discussing some of the wider issues that school, education and society face.

Finally, I wish you all a happy Easter and I look forward to seeing the students back in school on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April.



Mr M Quinn  
**Headteacher**

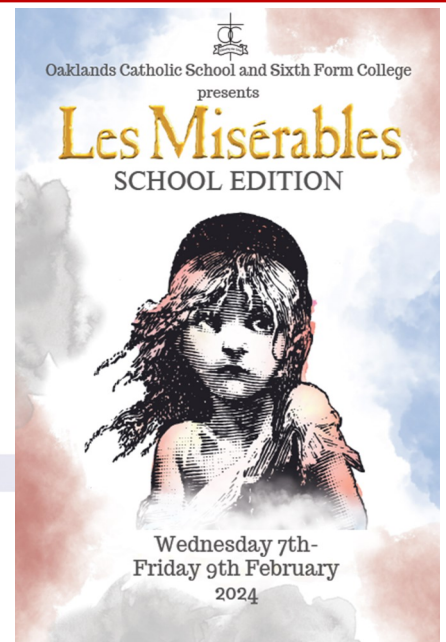


## Extra-Curricular Timetable for the Summer Term

The extra-curricular timetable will change for the summer term. We hope to update the timetable on our website over the Easter holidays, but the information will also be shared on each year group Team. [Extra Curricular - Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College](#) is the page on our website where the timetable will be published.

This year, our school production was the global phenomenon *Les Misérables*; based on the book written by Victor Hugo, and later converted into a successful musical by Claude-Michel Schönberg. The Performing Arts Team chose 'The School of Rock' for last year's show so this year it was time for something more classic. Despite *Les Mis* being written in modern times, its historical setting made it a contender for this year's choice. Mrs Richardson suggested *Les Mis* and everyone on the Performing Arts Team deliberated, ultimately embracing the huge challenge, saying: "We could actually do it...". They knew it would be a difficult production to put on, but they saw an opportunity and were all excited by it.

*Les Misérables* follows Jean Valjean, an ex-convict who breaks his patrol and is hunted down by Inspector Javert. He becomes the mayor of a town, where he meets a dying factory girl and becomes the guardian of her young daughter, whom he rescues from an innkeeper. Years later, his past catches up with him and he gets caught in a political uprising in Paris.



Due to the popularity and significance of *Les Misérables* the Performing Arts Team, along with the help of other members of staff, were tasked with the immense job of bringing this technical yet wonderful production to life. Throughout the rehearsal process, the team was faced with many challenges; however, they were able to overcome these, working tirelessly around the issues and ironing out things that couldn't work. They endeavoured to make this year's show the best it could be, honouring the intricacy and success of the musical. A special shout out to Mrs Richardson, Ms Whyte and Mrs Blackburn for their unwavering commitment to the brilliance of the school production of *Les Misérables*.

*Les Misérables* is known for its elaborate sets and its iconic songs and musical numbers; the job of emulating this was tough, yet the band was up to the challenge and collectively helped to bring the show together, complementing each number and performance brilliantly. Moreover, the sets were well-made, providing the stage with depth and volume completing the aesthetic of *Les Misérables*, and bringing the streets of Paris to life.

Finally, this year's production wouldn't have been complete without the exceptional performances and commitment from the students, who welcomed the show with excitement and open arms. Each student gave excellent performances from the ensemble giving life to each song, to Melanie Yates who gave a passionate and emotional performance as Fantine and Asti Hayes, who was able to capture the innocence and sentiment of Marius. Claudia Foster and Poppy Lyons gave awesome and sensitive performances as Cosette and Eponine whilst Eloise Knight and Rowan Dodsworth pulled off the comedic roles of the Thénardiens with brilliance. Cerys Colley led the Revolutionaries with confidence. Adam Hazell's performance as Jean Valjean was second-to-none and Jacob Kift, who played the imposing Inspector Javert, was terrifyingly convincing. Both male leads embodied their characters and embraced the responsibilities of such demanding roles. Well done also goes to Ellen Deal, Micaela Lawson and Spike Williams in Year 7 who played Little Cosette, Little Eponine and Gavroche.

Overall, this year's show excels in all respects. The sets seamlessly flowed into the next, creating a well-constructed and executed performance; the tech team and the band contributed hugely to the success of the show and the direction and behind-the-scenes support made the performance flawless. Another superb show that will go down as one of the greatest in Oaklands history!

**Jacob Boichot, Year 13**



I really enjoyed taking part in the Oaklands production of Les Misérables. It was such a great experience getting to perform with the cast each night to an amazing audience. I couldn't be more grateful to all the staff who worked behind the scenes to make all of the magic happen. This show was such a success for everyone involved including the incredible Oaklands band and tech team. This show has brought all the year groups together as a community in which everyone can showcase the massive amount of talent we have within our school. I loved how everyone put so much time, effort and energy into this show especially our magnificent directors as without them there would be no show. Overall I loved being a part of something so special and I wish we had "one day more" to do it all again.

**Ashlee, Year 10**

Being part of the band for Les Misérables was a fantastic experience, working alongside the cast and being challenged with new music. It was a great opportunity to broaden my music experience, being able to perform as a coherent group as well as being able to learn from more experienced musicians. Performing in Les Misérables was a joy to work towards and being able to see it all come together in the end.

**Gwenan, Year 13**

I loved being in the show because it was really fun to act as well as to sing. I was really excited yet nervous to step on stage on the nights of the show. I was proud that I joined and I'm definitely going to join next year's show.

**Spike, Year 7**

I played the flute in Les Mis and it was an exciting opportunity which I really enjoyed. It was difficult to count but was great to play in front of an audience. Overall really fun and challenging which made it a rewarding experience.

**Eniola, Year 10**

When Spike told me about the show, I wanted to join but when I joined, I started having doubts since it took most of my free time, but later on, I started to like acting and singing which resulted in me not quitting! After the show, my friends and family loved it and I was very proud.

**Ethan, Year 7**



## Science Week

**T**his year, Science Week took place from 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> March and had the theme of Time. Students were given the opportunity to participate in a nationwide competition with the British Science Association, making posters which matched the theme. The best five of which will be submitted as a whole school.



Also as part of Science week, 'The Big Plastic Count' took place, with students being given information about plastic waste and the reality of plastic pollution and the long-term hazards it poses to our planet. Key Stage 3 classes were quizzed on this in class, to see how much they actually knew about the problem and they were encouraged to participate in the nationwide count at home with their families.

### How much plastic waste does the UK generate?

Nearly 100 billion pieces of plastic packaging are thrown away every year by households in the UK.

The UK produces more plastic waste than any other country apart from the USA.

Do these figures surprise you?

**GREENPEACE** · **EVERYDAY PLASTIC**

In STEM club, students have continued building their upcycled bottle planters, which we hope to be able to hang after Easter, planting them with bee friendly flowers and other small plants. We hope to continue this theme of upcycling and continue to refresh the paved area around the back of Kolbe Block into the Summer Term.



## Environmental Club

**S**ome of the school's Environmental Group went out to see how much litter they could find in ten minutes. They wanted to investigate the extent of this issue around our school. In just one ten-minute window, the group filled a black bag, just from one area of the school. Some of this litter had even been blown past our fences and into the habitat beyond, posing potential risks to the wildlife.

As part of our focus on the Care of Creation, our students want to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their own litter and recycle where ever possible. They will continue to monitor and try and find solutions to this challenge and we commend them for their efforts!

A big thank you from Mrs Newbiggin!



## Biology Olympiad



**T**wenty-four pupils across the Sixth Form took part in the nationwide, advanced problem-solving competition for A Level students. Designed to challenge those with an interest in Biology, to expand their talents via two multiple choice papers sat online under exam conditions, the British Biology Olympiad requires students to use their biological intuition, logic and imagination to answer a series of questions.

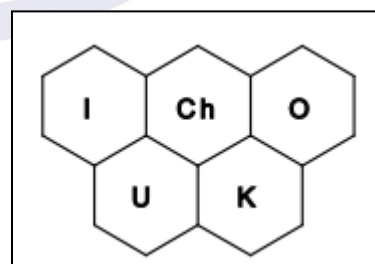
With more than 16,000 students from 800 schools across Great Britain taking part this year, we are hugely proud of all our students who took part, and particular congratulations to Natalia Kurczuk who achieved a Gold medal and was in the top 5% of the country; Jithu Thomas and Jessica Veal were our bronze medalists; Wendy Wheatley, Marvel Soyan, Melissa Hamilton, Maria Mihut and Anna Le Ngoc were all Highly Commended; Veeya Paul, Andrea Ilagan and Melissa Pacheco were Commended. Well done to all who participated in the event this year.

Mrs Gamble, Biology teacher, explains: "The British Biology Olympiad (BBO) challenges and stimulates students with an interest in Biology to expand and extend their talents. Students are presented with topics and ideas which they are not familiar with, so compete with their problem-solving skills and understanding of core principles. In addition to encouraging and rewarding pupils in their studies, the BBO is the first stage in selecting a team to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO seeks to challenge by both theory and practical tests some of the top pre-university biology students in the world, with over sixty countries taking part. This year Natalia Kurczuk will be entering the next round of the qualification, a first time for Oaklands Catholic School."



## Chemistry Olympiad

**S**ixteen Year 12 students entered the Royal Society of Chemistry's Olympiad exam in January. This is a very challenging exam that is aimed at Year 13 students so all sixteen deserve praise for entering. We are happy to say that one student, Sakura Cheraghi, reached Silver with her score and six other students, Shane Blastique, Natalia Kurczuk, Maria Mihut, Wendy Wheatley, Maria Danan and Marvel Soyan, were close behind and achieved Bronze. Congratulations to all of these students who will receive certificates after the Easter break.



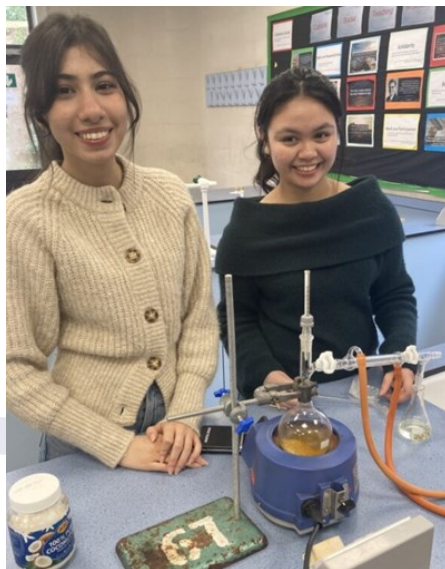
## RSC Schools Analyst Competition

This will be launched after Easter and is an opportunity for small groups of Year 12 students to work in teams, analysing samples related to a real life problem so that the results can be used to make decisions.



### CREST Awards

Several groups of Year 12 students are making excellent progress with their Gold CREST projects. One group made four batches of Aspirin to test different acid catalysts and assess their effect on yield and purity of Aspirin. This has given these students a head-start with aspects of the curriculum that they would not experience until Year 13. Some of these groups show-cased their projects during Science week.



A second group have made a bespoke piece of equipment to test if UV light could be used to kill bacteria in air. This involved making a carousel to hold tubes of nutrient broth to which a small amount of E Coli culture was added. Under controlled conditions the turbidity of the broth was measured using a device they made in school. This gave an indication of the amount of bacterial growth and so the effect of UV light could then be seen by varying the tubes exposure. The data generated can then be manipulated to make predictions about how much UV light would be needed to kill bacteria in certain volumes of air.

A third group of Year 12 students are trying to extract citrus oils from fruit so that they can use it to make perfumes. The extraction process has been a difficult one but they have had success recently and confirmed the presence of limonene in a distilled product. This will motivate the team to try extracting other oils and get to the perfume making stage before long.

A fourth group of students are investigating the effectiveness of different sun creams and are just embarking on the project. They will make a piece of equipment to allow uniform testing with a suitable UV lamp to mimic harmful UV rays from the sun and UV light sensitive beads which will mimic the skin's surfaces.

A very big thank you to the Science Lab Technicians who have helped students with ideas for projects and setting up lab sessions. Thanks also to the Design department who have helped make equipment for some of the projects.

***Coming soon ... Faraday Challenge, Year 8 STEM Showcase, STEM Days for Year 8 and Year 10, Year 12 Biology Field Trip and Big Bang Fair Trip ...***



**W**e left school on the Saturday morning looking forward to the skiing, but not necessarily the 23-hour coach journey. However, the journey went smoothly and we arrived in Andalo, Italy around midday on Sunday afternoon. There was no time to waste, as we went to the ski hire shop to get kitted out for the next day, but we eventually got to our rooms to settle in. We attended Mass in the local church in the evening and had our meal and got to bed early ready for the first days of skiing.



Three of our eight groups had skied before, so they found themselves going up the mountain, but the majority of the party learnt the basics on the nursery slopes for the first couple of days. However, all groups went further up the mountain as the week progressed. Although most were concentrating hard on the skiing, it was difficult to not let your mind drift as the scenery was dramatic – the Dolomite mountains with peaks in excess of 3000 metres provided a great backdrop for us all week.

Away from the slopes, we were given the opportunity to experience a variety of activities. As already mentioned, we attended Mass on Sunday evening, some went swimming on Monday, more experienced skiers attempted night skiing on Tuesday and we visited the town of Andalo on the Wednesday and Thursday. Given this schedule - combined with the skiing – we were glad to get some rest on the coach journey back. However, almost all of us left the resort with a degree of reluctance, such was the enjoyment of our time there.



On behalf of all the students that attended, we would like to say thank you to all the teachers that went: Mr Smith, Mr Wade, Mr Osbourne, Mr Whelan, Mrs Hardaker, Mrs Riddle, Mrs Kyrillou, Mrs Over, Mrs Sykes, Mrs McCann, Miss Woods and Ms Wilkinson and a special thanks to Mr Bamford for making this all possible.

This week will be one that is remembered; I would encourage those in Years 8, 11 and 12 to put themselves forward to go on this trip next year.

**Cerys, Year 12**

When Mr Gorman forwarded me an email with an opportunity to organise a trip to Disneyland Paris I thought, ok, challenge accepted! This is the first time I have ever run a trip and, despite it not being an easy thing to organise, I'm so glad I did because it was truly fantastic. Along with Mr Kennedy, Mrs Kelly and Mrs Vary from the Maths department and Miss Campbell from RE, we took 56 students across the border to France.

Our coach picked us up on the cold and dark school drive at 6.45am and we spent the entire day travelling to our hotel just outside of Disneyland. We arrived just before 8.00pm and settled in before having some dinner at the hotel. The students then had an hour or so of free time to get excited about the impending trip to the Parks the next day.

On day 2, we travelled the very short journey into the Disneyland Parks. On the coach, students were given their tickets to access both Parks all day and told very sternly not to lose them. All but one student managed to follow that instruction. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Mrs Vary who had lost hers by lunchtime! Luckily, she had a photo pass.

The students headed straight in, full of energy and the teachers made a beeline for the Starbucks in Disney Village - thank goodness for coffee! Later in the day, the students met back up with us to attend the Maths seminar and workshop. This linked the financial and rollercoaster design elements of a theme park directly with the GCSE curriculum. Speaking to the Maths teachers afterwards, we could all spot topics that we had covered recently in class so it was great for the students to see those in a real-life context. Following the seminar, the students then got to take part in a workshop, working in teams to design their own rollercoasters and test its speed.

After that, it was back into the Park until the very end where we got to watch the Main Street fireworks over the castle before shuttling back to our hotel. Students were very grateful that they got to stay at the park until the very end, arriving back at the hotel at nearly midnight. It had been a fabulous day blessed with lovely weather and short queue times for rides.

Day three and all too soon we were on our way home. I think it's fair to say that the coach was considerably quieter coming back than it had been on day one.

As a teacher running a big trip abroad for the first time, I cannot express enough how proud our Oaklands young people made me. They all listened to instructions beautifully and consistently met us at meeting points on time. They were all organised and polite to both Oaklands staff and members of staff from the tour operator. They really exemplified our mission statement at every opportunity. I was particularly impressed with how well they looked after each other, even students not in their main circle of friends.

I was asked if this would become a regular trip and I said it really depended on how well the first time went. The impeccable behaviour of the students we took meant that it was a very enjoyable trip for everyone involved and so will definitely be going again next year!

I have to finish by thanking everyone who made the trip a success; I may have led it but it could never have happened without the help of so many others. So, thank you to Mr Bamford for your sage advice and help planning; to the Finance team who helped me iron out the details, and a big thank you to the amazing teachers that gave up their time in half term to come along. You helped make a magical and memorable experience for our young people!



*Mrs J Beauvoisin*



**D**uring February half term we completed the second part of our Spanish exchange programme with students in Arcos de la Frontera. Fifteen Oaklands students spent a week in this beautiful town in the South of Spain. They stayed with their partner's families and attended lessons at the local secondary school, where they also took part in workshops such as flamenco dancing, acting and film making!

We were able to spend a day visiting the most famous landmarks in the historic city of Seville, had a guided tour of the bull-fighting museum and enjoyed sunny weather. On the Thursday we visited Cadiz and learned all about sherry making at the Gonzalez-Byas cellars in Jerez, nearby. The last day was a special treat, as the town celebrated the Carnival parade and students were able to dress up and participate in this with their friends.

**Lily writes:** "Staying with the Spanish family was great. I ate traditional Spanish meals and lived in the traditional Spanish way of life. My Spanish has greatly improved too."

**Hayden said:** "My favourite part of the trip was making new friends."

**Sam said:** "My experience in Spain was unforgettable. I learnt about Spanish culture and looked into the life of a Spanish student ... I gained confidence in speaking Spanish."



## Year 9 Languages Day



**T**his term, Year 9 students took part in a languages day with a careers focus. They enjoyed a range of workshops to apply and develop their language skills, including learning basic greetings and introductions in Japanese, interpreting and etymology (learning about the origin and evolution of words). During a video link session with our partner school in Spain, they used their French and Spanish to converse with the Spanish students.



Sixth form students and other presenters talked to them about the opportunities that knowledge of foreign languages will afford them both at a personal and professional level.

**Ms A Garcia de Veas de Gimena**

## Student Leadership

**A**s you might be aware, here at Oaklands we try to ensure that our students are prepared for life. One of the ways we do this is to offer students opportunities to be leaders, to take responsibilities for various aspects of student life. In the last two years, we have focused on the development of student leadership provision to enable students to help staff in ensuring that we live out our mission statement; Community Unity Opportunity.

### Year 13:

In February, the current Year 13 student leadership team passed on the baton of leadership to Year 12 students. As we previously shared, we are grateful for everything the Year 13 student leaders did for the school, under the leadership of Leona Newman (President) and Nadia Norman (Vice President). We wish them well as they enter the last phase of preparing for their A Level examinations in the summer.

### Year 12:

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our new student leadership team:

President	Larisa Antemir
Vice President	Emily Bray
Charism Team Leaders	Ashley Song and Jeffrey Mamman Mathew
Curriculum Team Leaders	Sakura Cheraghi and Marvel Soyan
Co-Curriculum Team Leader	Cerys Colley
Pastoral Team Leader	Isobel Whyte

Next term, our new President and Vice President will share their vision and plans for the months ahead. However, here are a few things to help give you a little flavour of the things our student leaders are involved in: organising and leading student council meetings, collecting students' opinion on various aspects of school life like curriculum, canteen, extra-curricular activities and supporting canteen staff at break and lunchtime. Students are also involved in organising charity events for charities such as CAFOD. This year, they will play a big part in organising our second Fundraising Friday in the summer. They are also running a mentorship programme, where students in the sixth form mentor students in the lower years. This year, this has been extended to pupils at St Peter's Catholic Primary School.

### Year 10 and Year 11:

We also take this opportunity to thank our Year 11 student leaders for their service to the school for the last 12 months and wish them well as they prepare for their GCSEs. Year 10s now take on this leadership role. After Easter, they will undergo their induction and then start serving the school in a supervisory role in different parts of the school at break and lunchtime.

By engaging in all these activities, our students show that Oaklands is not just a place they come to acquire academic knowledge, it is also a place they add a PLUS to life; make a difference today, not wait for tomorrow.



Our President and Vice President, Larisa and Emily (left)

Our Student Leadership Team (right)





## Performing Arts News

### Mountbatten Festival of Music

On 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March, the Mountbatten Festival of Music returned to the Royal Albert Hall in London. These concerts display the outstanding versatility of some of the world's finest military musicians and are given the "West End" treatment with spectacular lighting effects. The Festival sees the Royal Marines showcase their incredible musicianship and pageantry and features a wide range of musical styles, including music from the big screen and superb solo items, as well as the traditional marches and overtures that have proved such a hit with audiences over the years.



"The Royal Marines band at the Royal Albert Hall were amazing I loved the Iron Maiden drummer Nicko. The whole venue was extraordinary. There was a tribute to the Invictus games where some of the participants appeared on stage. Katie Derham compered the event and the band played a variety of genres of music including Jazz, Musicals, Rock, Classical and film soundtracks. Overall the night was spectacular. Thank you to Mr Smith, our drum teacher who was able to secure these complimentary tickets for our drumming students, A Level and GCSE Music students. Five families took up this wonderful opportunity."

*Michelle, Year 10*

"I was so thrilled when we got tickets to the Mountbatten Festival of Music. Our family had never been to the Royal Albert Hall so we were all excited. When we got there and sat in our seats, I was amazed at the decorative walls. I liked the Royal Marines Band and its drummers because they were all perfectly in sync when playing and marching. The coolest thing I think was the band and Nicko McBrain playing famous Iron Maiden metal songs. It was a wonderful experience for me and I am very thankful to Mr Smith who organised this."

*Spike, Year 7*

### Student Success



Congratulations to Charlie Boundy, Year 13, who has recently passed his Grade 8 Guitar Exam with distinction. Charlie worked very hard for the exam alongside his A Level studies and this is an amazing achievement

It was Charlie's ambition to take Grade 8 before he left Oaklands and he smashed it!

### Coming Soon ...



Thursday 13th June	Oaklands at Waterloo Music Festival, St George's Church Lunchtime session, 12.30-1.15pm
Thursday 20th June	Summer Music Concert, Oaklands School 7.00pm

### Design Showcase

On 21<sup>st</sup> March the annual Design and Technology Showcase took place. This year's GCSE and A Level work was displayed and students had the chance to talk to Oaklands staff about their products.

The main aim of this event was to celebrate the students' achievements. It is not easy to design and make a product from start to finish and although along the way the students have had ups and downs, they have produced completed products that they should be proud of.

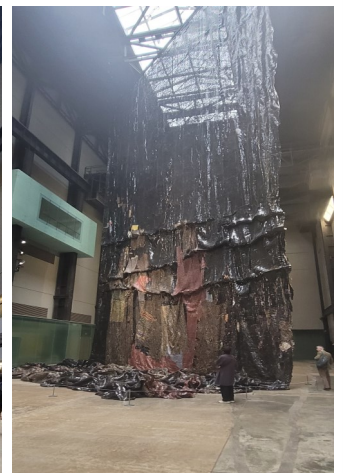
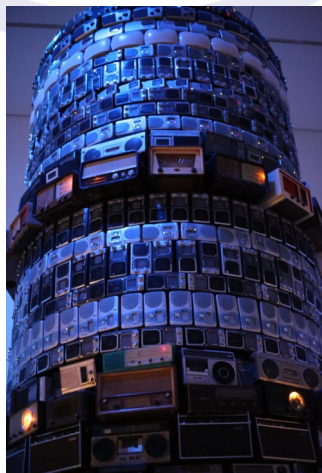
Another reason for holding this event was to allow students to gather feedback about their products from other people; this is the final part of the folder of work they have to submit for assessment towards their GCSE.

The students all received very positive feedback and the staff were very impressed not only with the work that was on show but the positive, honest and reflective way that students spoke about their products.



### Tate Modern Trip

On 6<sup>th</sup> February we were able to take GCSE and A Level students from Art, Photography and Textiles to the Tate Modern. The students were able to immerse themselves in a variety of artwork which has helped inspire them for their final exam projects. All students were well behaved and engaged well into the galleries and we look forward to seeing their artwork progress after this inspiring trip.





**T**he Spring Term is an opportunity for renewal and recalibration; students and staff alike are working together to achieve progress in the endeavour of success with the exam season approaching and furthering themselves both personally and academically. New pressures and stresses emerge, but so too does the feeling of excitement and new beginnings. It seems apt that we have the season of Lent to reconcile our thoughts, reflect on the lessons of the last academic year and as we approach Holy Week, commemorate Jesus' sacrifice for us all.

St John's have started their new academic year, launching a Junior Secondary section to their school – in the hope that more children will join them in full-time education, working alongside our support and partnership. All year groups/grades are now back in school – learning, collaborating and achieving as a community through their shared faith.

Mr Stephen Mwangi, the Headteacher for St John's, expressed: *"Thank you for your correspondence. We are happy to have crossed over in God's love. I am so overjoyed by the prosperous partnership we have forged together – especially in the past year that I have been Headteacher. We work together in furthering the lives of the children at St John's and the education they may have missed without your support. We are all doing well and have started our new year. On behalf of St John's Primary and Junior Secondary School, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your support. Putting even more pupils in our Junior Secondary section of the school for a whole term, full-time (3 months), is not just support but a huge blessing. We are grateful and we continue praying for you and your continued support – both through challenging times and in days of success. Mungu awabariki (God bless you)."*

With the season of Lent, we have an opportunity to remind ourselves of the value of repentance. A key time to focus on repenting sin and consecrating oneself to God. Lent should not be a time of loss, but celebration. God's love for us and his forgiveness, allows us to come together in faith – we are united by the cross borne by Jesus. This is what provides us with fullness and preparedness for the year ahead – whether it be challenging, joyous or both.

It is evident that even during times of strain and pressure, we are all centred around our shared faith and belief that there will be brighter days ahead. I will leave you with this piece of scripture from Isaiah 40:30-31: *"Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."*

Happy Easter and thank you for your continued support,

**Mr C Osbourne**



It has been a busy but exciting start to 2024 in the Sixth Form. Here are just some of the selected highlights.

## UCAS Success

Year 13 have done a fantastic job in successfully completing their UCAS applications and preparing for life beyond Sixth Form. As we approach Easter over 95% of our Year 13 students have been offered places across a range of prestigious universities, including Oxbridge. It is also exciting to see the highest ever number of applicants we have going for medicine and related degrees. A growing number of our Year 13 are also securing highly competitive degree apprenticeships with leading companies, including 'magic circle' law firms. I am sure you will want to join me in wishing them every success as they now prepare for their final exams.



## Sixth Form - 'To Love and Serve'

We had a truly special Sixth Form Mass in March which for the first time had music provided by our very own Sixth Form band members. As ever it was fantastic to see us all come together as a Sixth Form family to celebrate what we truly are.

Love and service is set at the very heart of what we are as a Catholic community. This is evident in all the wonderful contributions our Sixth Formers make to the wider school and society. As well as the big events such as the school show and concerts, this love and service happens every day from duties to providing mentoring lower down the school.



Most recently we have been arranging Sixth Form visits to local care homes where our students volunteer to spend time meeting and having tea with residents. To see the grace and kindness of our Sixth Formers as they meet speak with those in often difficult circumstances makes us all so proud. Thank you to all those who have volunteered.

## Sixth Form Events

The Sixth Form is now closely collaborating in the 'Getting into Medicine' initiative developed in partnership with the Dr Mike King Trust, a consortium of GPs, healthcare providers and colleges. This has included creating a brand new programme to provide our Sixth Formers with mentoring and support in preparing for medical school applications and study. The record numbers of our students being offered places to study medicine and related courses shows this is already bearing fruit and we are fast becoming the Sixth Form of choice for those interested in medical careers.



The Doctor  
Mike King  
Trust



The HE Plus programme also continues to flourish. Our Sixth Formers have attended a range of university style lectures provided by the University of Cambridge. These lectures have spanned a wide range of subjects and helped provide our students with an invaluable insight into university study.



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE



The dark nights of January were made that bit brighter by the EPQ presentation evening in which our Sixth Formers presented the independent research they had undertaken for their various projects. From water pollution to artificial intelligence, from the impact of wind power to the future of the NHS, the range of topics on display was impressive. The evening was a great success and has become a key fixture in the Sixth Form calendar. A huge thanks and congratulations to all those who took part and to all those who came along in support. As ever, thank you to Dr Colvin for organising this special event.



In February the Sixth Form once again hosted the popular a Post-18 Pathways Evening for parents. This was an opportunity to learn and discuss the possible pathways open for our students once they complete their studies at Sixth Form. The feedback from this event was great and we are truly fortunate to have such engaged and supportive parents. As part of our Post-18 pathways programme we will also shortly take all of Year 12 to a UCAS Fair in Bournemouth where there will an opportunity to meet with universities and other course providers from across the country. This a great way to find out about future options and courses.

## **Year 12 Geography Project (Mrs Broadway)**

In an effort to breathe new life into Waterlooville's town centre, Oaklands welcomed Richard Eastham from FERIA Urbanism, working with Havant Borough Council to enlighten our Year 12 Geography and Economics students on the intricacies of the Waterlooville Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan.



Waterlooville, our nearest town, has faced its fair share of challenges, with a noticeable decline in the town centre and high street, marked by numerous empty shops and an overall uninviting atmosphere. Richard Eastham's presentation provided a beacon of hope, shedding light on the regeneration proposals and plans that aim to transform this urban space.

Richard's insightful presentation went beyond the conventional classroom experience, offering students a real-world understanding of how urban regeneration initiatives take shape. From the initial proposals to the final plans, students learned about the intricate web of considerations that must be taken into account when undertaking such a transformative project.

One of the key takeaways from Richard's presentation was the vital role that different stakeholders play in the regeneration process. Students gained valuable insights into how collaboration among various entities, including local government and community organisations, can contribute to the success of urban revitalisation.

For Oaklands students, this session was not just a theoretical exploration—it was an opportunity to witness Geography in action. The presentation emphasized the dynamic relationship between urban spaces and the people who inhabit them. Students left with a profound understanding of the impact their voices can have in shaping the future of their community.

As Waterlooville embarks on this transformative journey, our students are eagerly anticipating further developments in the project. The presentation has sparked enthusiasm among the student body, inspiring them to engage with the process and contribute their ideas to the ongoing revitalisation efforts. Oaklands expresses gratitude to Richard Eastham for his invaluable contribution to our students' education and as the project unfolds, we eagerly anticipate updates and remain optimistic about the positive changes that lie ahead for our beloved town.

## **Easter Quiz**

It cannot be all work and no play and so to break up some intense revision, the entire Sixth Form came together in the Main Hall for a special Easter Quiz which was great fun. There were prizes and certificates galore as well as a fair amount of suspected cheating! A big thanks to Mrs Evans for making this happen.

Finally, thank you to our Sixth Form students, support staff, teachers, governors and parents for all their hard work and dedication this term.



Have a wonderful Easter!

**Mr D Godwin**

**R**ecently we have been thinking about what makes Oaklands distinctive, what makes it stand apart from other schools. This has led to us contemplating how the Chapel is our very own, very special sacred space. Not only does its unique architectural flair lend us a sense of tradition going back to the 1800s, but the Catholic tradition it has gifted us reaches back to when it was used by our founding sisters in the 1960s and beyond. Not everyone has the opportunity to spend time in a building so old and unique that it has listed status. Moreover, not everyone has the opportunity to be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament each day.

Talking with our students it is uplifting to hear their perspective on this very special place.

It's a place where you can come and be with people of faith and Christians. It's a place where you can be with God, and you can just be.

**Pana, Year 10**

Chapel is not only the place that you can make friends and meet people, but the place you can talk about God. It is also the thing that connects every person in Oaklands who studies here.

**Jenny, Year 9**

It is a very unique place, you can socialise with people who know the Spirit more. There are places like the library and the canteen and it [the chapel] is just way different, it is a really great place to be, even if you don't know people there, and it's a really tight knit community.

**Tom, Year 8**

We take part in activities like the Bible Studies on Monday lunchtime and we also do lots of crafting. It's a really calm place at lunchtimes and it's really just a nice place to be and everyone is kind to each other.

**Sarah, Year 10**



We look forward to welcoming ever more people to our Chapel in the summer term – including parishioners joining us for Mass and Year 6 pupils from St Thomas More's and St Peter's Primary Schools.

So next time you are in the area – do pop in to enjoy this special place and offer up a prayer!





## Sacred Heart and St Peter the Apostle, Waterloooville

### **Maundy Thursday**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 8.00pm  
(watching until midnight)

### **Good Friday**

Children's Stations of the Cross 10.00am  
Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Holy Saturday**

Vigil Mass 8.00pm

### **Easter Sunday**

Dawn Mass 8.30am  
Mass 10.30am

## St Michael's and All Angels, Leigh Park

### **Maundy Thursday**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 7.00pm  
(watching until 10.00pm night prayer)

### **Good Friday**

Children's Stations of the Cross 10.00am  
Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Holy Saturday**

Blessing of Easter Food 10.00am  
Vigil Mass 8.00pm

### **Easter Sunday**

Mass 10.00am

## St Patrick's, Hayling Island

### **Maundy Thursday**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 7.00pm  
(watching until midnight)

### **Good Friday**

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Holy Saturday**

Vigil and First Mass of Easter 6.30pm

### **Easter Sunday**

Mass 11.30am



## St Joseph's, Havant / St Thomas', Emsworth

### **Maundy Thursday – St Thomas'**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 6.00pm

### **Maundy Thursday – St Joseph's (Polish)**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 7.00pm

### **Good Friday – St Thomas'**

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Good Friday – St Joseph's (Polish)**

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Holy Saturday – St Joseph's**

Blessing of the Food 12.00, 1pm, 4pm

Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Vigil Mass (Polish) 9.00pm

### **Easter Sunday – St Thomas'**

Mass 9.00am

### **Easter Sunday – St Joseph's**

Dawn Mass (Polish) 7.00am

Mass 11.00am

Mass (Polish) 1.00pm

## St Edmund's, Horndean

### **Maundy Thursday**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 7.30pm  
(watching until 10.00pm)

### **Good Friday**

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Easter Sunday**

Mass 9.30am

## St Colman's, Cosham

### **Maundy Thursday**

Mass of the Lord's Last Supper 7.30pm

### **Good Friday**

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm

### **Holy Saturday**

Vigil Mass 7.30pm

### **Easter Sunday**

Mass 9.30am

## QA Hospital Chapel

### **Easter Sunday**

Mass 4.00pm

## Author Visit

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January we had the absolute privilege to meet Mr Stephen Kelman and he spoke with some of our Year 10 and Year 11 students with Mrs Groucott and Mrs Newbiggin.

This was a first for our school to be able to invite an author of an English GCSE exam text to come and speak to us. This provided the students with a unique and important opportunity to expand their knowledge of the text and further nurture their love of literature and the joy of writing.

Mr Kelman was able to discuss with the students his own background, his inspiration for writing the novel, the reasons he loves being a writer as a full-time job and some invaluable insights into the characters and themes of this exam text. He was very popular with our students and was very approachable, some lucky students even had their books signed too.

Year 11 said that *"Kelman was really nice"* and *"that it really helped me to understand some of the characters in new ways."* We hope that this will help them in their future exams.

Year 10 said *"I am really excited to read the book now"*.

We are extremely grateful to Mr Kelman for his visit and hope to meet him again in future years!



## Careers News

The hall was busily buzzing last week, with inspiring alumni who came in to talk all things careers, from A Levels and apprenticeships through to exactly what they do now. We were thrilled to welcome Miss Davies from Rocksteady Music School, Lt Cdr Hill, an Engineer in the Royal Navy, Miss Hopkins, a Veterinary Surgeon at Cedar Vets in Alton and Mr Perry, the CEO of VIVID Homes to name a few. It was a fantastic week and students enjoyed superb insight into various career paths and how to be successful in the world of work.

*"It was really interesting seeing Mark, the CEO of VIVID, talk about how he progressed through the years after he left Oaklands. He really surprised me that such a great business person had to struggle and start at the bottom and work his way up. It has really showed what you can achieve and put into perspective what you can do if you try. Mark was a great inspiration to all who listened in the assembly. Overall, it was a very great experience."*

**Evie, Year 8**

*"This was such an educational visit and experience. Lt Cdr Hill talked about how the Navy works with all the rank and rates. Then he explained his journey from the start. Afterwards he was kind enough to answer a few questions and made sure I saw clarity in each of the answers. This was an amazing experience and I feel honoured to have been part of this."*

**Katherine, Year 9**

*"It was really interesting seeing the veterinary talk as I was very surprised you could get a degree in another country and still get the same experience. It also found it quite interesting how you can volunteer in another country and work so close with wild animals. Overall, I thought it was a really great talk."*

**Maja, Year 9**





### **OAKLANDS CATHOLIC SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM COLLEGE SEEKS FOUNDATION GOVERNORS TO JOIN THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

**We currently have vacancies for Foundation Governors on our Governing Body.**

The Governors of Oaklands Catholic School work as a team, in close co-operation with the Head Teacher and all staff.

Governors ensure the clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; the performance management of staff; overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Foundation Governors must be practising Catholics and specifically ensure that the religious character of the school is preserved; that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed; that the religious education curriculum is in accordance with the Bishop's policy for the Diocese.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation.

We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

We know that there are members of the whole Oaklands Catholic community who will be prepared to join us in this important function and give their time to help us continue improving the school's performance and the lived and educational experience of all our pupils.

Oaklands would benefit from people with experience in project management, HR & people management; accountancy / financial management, marketing and logistics. But fundamentally we are looking for an enthusiasm to do right by the school; the staff and our pupils.

No previous 'board' or governance experience is necessary; there is an induction programme, a wide range of additional training and mentoring for new (and existing) governors. Incidentally, there are some great benefits in terms of personal development and experience in an important and dynamic field.

If you are willing to take on a challenge please contact the Clerk to the Governors to ask any questions and/or register your interest: [C.Colley@oaklandscatholicschool.org](mailto:C.Colley@oaklandscatholicschool.org)



## Noticeboard

### From Hampshire County Council



It's almost time for the Easter break and we recognise this time off can be both cherished family time and a tricky balancing act for many. Don't forget there are a range of **practical resources focussed on emotional health** at [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk) and your school is in a pre-paid area meaning they are all **completely free for you to access!**

Hampshire County Council has partnered with the Solihull Approach to provide **free, evidence-based online courses** with practical tips and advice to boost parent's and carer's confidence, help them navigate family life, and strengthen their relationships. Whether you are a mum, dad, foster parent or grandparent, there is a course for you. Once registered, families receive unlimited access to the courses and can go back to them as their children grow. The interactive courses cover topics like:

- Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby (Antenatal)
- Understanding your baby (Postnatal)
- Understanding your child with additional needs (0-19 years)
- Understanding your child's mental health and wellbeing
- Understanding the impact of the pandemic on your child/teenager
- Understanding your brain (for teenagers only)
- Understanding your feelings (for teenagers only)

Developed by psychologists and professionals, they have been designed to help you understand your child's feelings, development and behaviour, as well as focus on your own feelings as you grow as a family. To register for parent courses, you will need to have a Hampshire postcode and complete the following steps:

1. Visit <https://inourplace.co.uk/>
2. Select 'Apply Access Code'
3. Enter the access code: **FAMILY**
4. Enter your information and select the relevant course

Further information can be found at: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/solihullapproach>

### ARE YOU LOOKING TO HIRE A GREAT VENUE?

*Oaklands has a number of facilities available to hire.*

**Theatre Style Hall   Sports Hall & Gym   ICT Suites   Classrooms**  
**Kitchen & Catering Facilities**

\*\*\*

*We can also facilitate*

**Meetings**

**Conferences**

**Training Days**

**Our extensive grounds and sunken lawn provide the perfect setting for Social Gatherings**

*If you would like more information regarding any of our facilities please contact Claire Aksoy.*



**Tel: 02392 259214**

**Email : [lettings@oaklandscatholicschool.org](mailto:lettings@oaklandscatholicschool.org)**

**Scan our lettings QR Code**

## Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College - Alumni

**Were you a student here ... ?**

**Stay in touch with us and help ...**

It doesn't matter when you left school, whether you're in further education or employment or where you live - Oaklands still needs your help! If you would like to see our exceptional school continue to thrive, please let us have your details by signing up to the Future First database.

Go to [www.futurefirst.org.uk](http://www.futurefirst.org.uk)

Go to the 'Sign Up' tab

Click 'Former Student'

Type in **Oaklands Catholic School**





<b>Autumn Term 2024</b>	<b>Monday 2 September to Friday 20 December 2024</b>						
<b>Half Term:</b>	Monday 28 October - Friday 1 November						
<b>Spring Term 2025</b>	<b>Monday 6 January to Friday 4 April 2025</b>						
<b>Half Term:</b>	Monday 17 - Friday 21 February						
<b>Summer Term 2025</b>	<b>Tuesday 22 April to Friday 18 July 2025</b>						
<b>Bank Holiday:</b>	Monday 21 April						
<b>Bank Holiday:</b>	Monday 5 May						
<b>Half Term:</b>	Monday 26 - Friday 30 May						
<b>INSET Days are as follows:</b>	<table> <tr> <td>Monday 2 September 2024</td><td>Tuesday 3 September 2024</td></tr> <tr> <td>Friday 4 October 2024</td><td>Friday 20 December 2024</td></tr> <tr> <td>Friday 27 June 2025</td><td>Friday 18 July 2025</td></tr> </table>	Monday 2 September 2024	Tuesday 3 September 2024	Friday 4 October 2024	Friday 20 December 2024	Friday 27 June 2025	Friday 18 July 2025
Monday 2 September 2024	Tuesday 3 September 2024						
Friday 4 October 2024	Friday 20 December 2024						
Friday 27 June 2025	Friday 18 July 2025						
<b>Student Return:</b>	<p>Wednesday 4 September 2024 (Year 7 and Year 12)</p> <p>Thursday 5 September 2024 (all students to return)</p>						

**All dates are accurate at the time of going to press. The school reserves the right to make alterations.**

## Key Dates and Reminders for Year 11 and Year 13

<b>Public Exam Season</b>	<table> <tr> <td>GCSE Exams</td><td>9 May to 19 June</td></tr> <tr> <td>A Level Exams</td><td>13 May to 25 June</td></tr> </table>	GCSE Exams	9 May to 19 June	A Level Exams	13 May to 25 June
GCSE Exams	9 May to 19 June				
A Level Exams	13 May to 25 June				
<b>Contingency Sessions</b>	<p>Thursday 6 June (afternoon)</p> <p>Thursday 13 June (afternoon)</p> <p>Wednesday 26 June (all day)</p>				
<b>Year 13 Leavers' Mass and Celebration</b>	Thursday 9 May (evening)				
<b>Year 13 Last Day</b>	Friday 10 May				
<b>Year 11 Leavers' Mass and Last Day</b>	Friday 24 May				
<b>Year 11 Prom</b>	Thursday 4 July				
<b>A Level Results Day</b>	Thursday 15 August				
<b>GCSE Results Day</b>	Thursday 22 August				

### Contingency Sessions

These sessions are set aside should sustained national or local disruption arise during the exam season. This means that all candidates must be available to sit exams from the start of the season until Wednesday 26 June inclusive.

### Equipment

Parents should be aware of the equipment their children will need for exams.

A list of items needed for each subject will be on our website:

[\*\*\*Examinations - Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College\*\*\*](#)

# Dates for the Summer Term

Monday	15 April 2024	<b>Spring Term Begins (Week 1)</b> Iceland Trip Information Evening (6.00pm) OFPA Meeting (7.30pm)
Monday	22 April	<b>Year 12 Tests (to 3 May) (students on study leave)</b>
Thursday	2 May	<b>Year 10 Written Reports and Grades Home</b>
Monday	6 May	<b>Bank Holiday</b>
Tuesday	7 May	<b>Year 9 Assessment Week</b>
Thursday	9 May	<b>GCSE / A Level Exam Season Starts</b> <b>Year 13 Leavers' Mass and Celebration (evening)</b>
Friday	10 May	<b>Year 13 Last Day</b>
Monday	13 May	Governors' Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting OFPA Meeting (7.30pm)
Wednesday	15 May	Full Governors' Meeting
Monday	20 May	<b>Year 8 Assessment Week</b>
Wednesday	22 May	<b>Year 12 Test Grades and UCAS Predicted Grades Home</b>
Thursday	23 May	<b>Year 10 Parents' Evening in the Hall</b>
Friday	24 May	<b>Year 11 Last Day with Mass and Celebration</b>
Monday-Friday	27 - 31 May	<b>Half Term</b>
Monday	3 June	<b>Year 7 Assessment Week</b> OFPA Meeting (7.30pm)
Wednesday	5 June	<b>SEN Parents' Evening</b>
Thursday	6 June	Year 8 STEM Showcase Evening
Monday	10 June	Governors' Business and Collaboration Committee Meeting
Tuesday	11 June	Art Exhibition Evening
Wednesday	12 June	Year 8 HPV Vaccinations (+ Thursday 13 June)
Thursday	13 June	KS4 Induction Evening
Monday	17 June	<b>Year 10 Tests and Careers Activities (to 28 June)</b> Governors' Ethos and Strategy Committee Meeting
Tuesday	18 June	Year 10 Post-16 Event (or Wednesday 19 June) tbc
Thursday	20 June	<b>Summer Music Concert (7.00pm)</b>
Monday-Thursday	24-27 June	<b>Challenge Week and Sixth Form Enrichment Week</b>
Wednesday	26 June	<b>GCSE / A Level Exam Contingency Day</b>
Friday	28 June	<b>Fundraising Friday</b>
Monday	1 July	<b>Year 10 Work Experience Week</b> OFPA Meeting (7.30pm)
Wednesday	3 July	Full Governors' Meeting
Thursday	4 July	<b>Year 11 Prom</b>
Friday	5 July	<b>New Year 7 Induction Day</b>
Monday	8 July	New Year 7 Induction Evening (for parents) <b>Year 7-9 Reports / Year 10 Grades + Summer Homework (this week)</b>
Tuesday	9 July	Sixth Form Induction Day
Thursday	11 July	<b>Sports Day</b>
Friday	12 July	Year 10 Practice Interviews (+ Monday 15 July)
Thursday	18 July	<b>Last Day of Term</b>
Friday	19 July	<b>INSET Day</b>