



Oaklands News

Issue 456, May 2024



Community - Unity - Opportunity

From the Headteacher's Desk

This week's issue of the Oaklands News contains several articles related to student leadership. Our students possess enormous leadership potential. They are tomorrow's leaders in the workplace, the family, the community, and in government. Increasingly, schools have taken on the significant responsibility of nurturing leadership in young people.

The promotion of leadership potential in students is not just the preserve of Catholic schools. However, if Catholic schools profess to develop the whole person academically, spiritually, socially and morally, then an important element of that development entails explicit promotion of leadership.

At Oaklands, our student leadership draws its inspiration from the life and death of Jesus. We expect all our students to demonstrate servant leadership and to act as role models for our community. Developing these skills prepares students for the world beyond Oaklands. Our school values are evident in all aspects of school life and our Sixth Form provides many opportunities for students to build the key skills which make great leaders; communication, teamwork, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, decision-making and management skills.

We are proud of the contributions our current and future teams have made to our school community, and we look forward to furthering our great tradition of servant leadership over the next cycle.

Meet our new Student Leaders

Before I joined Oaklands Catholic School, I had never experienced an environment where students took direct responsibility and involvement in planning events, alongside staff. This always perplexed me because how can we, the main participants in education, not be involved in these processes?

I was delighted, therefore, when I heard about the existence and influence of the Student Leadership Team here at Oaklands. The engagement of the Student Leaders shows how much the school and Sixth Form staff encourage us to use our voices and embody the collective message, 'Community Unity Opportunity'.

Although I started my role as Student President not too long ago, myself and the team already have several exciting plans. With the help of my Vice President and one of my best friends, Emily Bray, our incredible Student Leadership Team, including Ashley Song, Jeffrey Mamman (Charism Team Leaders), Cerys Colley (Co-Curriculum Team Leader), Isobel Whyte (Pastoral Team Leader), Marvel Soyan and Sakura Cheragh (Curriculum Team Leaders), and Veeya Paul and Camille Nase (Secretaries), I look forward to an exciting list of events throughout the rest of this term and into next year.

We have some great activities planned for the rest of this academic year, starting with a Sixth Form charity event named 'Sleep Out to Help Out'. Sixth Formers will be camping out on the school field (under Mr Godwin's supervision!) to raise funds and awareness for those who do not have a bed to sleep in, or even sleep outside. We have also started planning our 'Oaklands at the Seaside' Summer Concert and we hope this will be an amazing way to finish this academic year.

Culture Week is just one way we celebrate our school's values and the diversity that lies not just in Oaklands, but in the entire world. Planning for next year's Culture Week has already started, focusing on how we can involve more people, especially those who weren't able to do it previously.

The Autumn term is usually a busy one for Year 13 students who will be concentrating on UCAS statement writing and university applications. To spread the load, we are planning to involve more Year 12, Year 11 and Year 10 students in the preparations. The amount of work our Leadership Teams put in shows how dedicated they are to their work, and that deserves recognition and appreciation.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mr Sumba and Mr Godwin, who offer us support and encouragement throughout everything we do. Although our journey is only just beginning, I feel it is never too early to say thank you. Of course, our previous President and Vice President, Leona and Nadia, deserve just as much praise and a big thank you for the legacy they left for Oaklands, one which we will continue to treasure and keep alive.

Larisa Antemir, Student President (2024-2025)



From the Governors



I would like to extend a big thank you to all Governors from everyone at Oaklands and myself, in particular those who have retired from the role recently for their work in supporting quality education at Oaklands. I am pleased to announce we have three new members currently going through the process to become Foundation Governors, and so this is a good opportunity for one such Governor, Clare Hopkins, to explain the role and why she feels it's important.

Elizabeth R Cluett, Chair of Governors

When Mr Quinn dropped an email asking me if I'd like to become a Foundation Governor at Oaklands Catholic School, I was taken aback. I'd only just left the school after a long tour of duty at the 'chalk face' so surely the school had had enough of me?! And vice versa. But if you have loved your job and loved your workplace, it's a real joy to return to the fold on a different side of the fence. Who wouldn't enjoy finding out how things work on a corporate level and discovering how the Governing Body and school leaders work together to promote the best possible outcomes for all the students?

As a Governor assigned to a specific department, (Design and Technology in my case), it is both exciting and rewarding to get involved again in aspects of school life which were a mystery to me during my teaching life. A Governor has the chance to meet staff and students working across the curriculum and find out how different parts of the school contribute so vitally to the academic and spiritual growth of the students.

We Governors are responsible for ensuring that the school adheres to its Catholic mission as well as delivering a rich and holistic curriculum. It is quite daunting at first to discover how much responsibility Governors must take for the strategic pathways adopted across every aspect of school life. Governors hold ultimate responsibility for the curriculum content, the financial performance of the school and the clarity of ethos.

Above all in our Catholic school, we Governors must take care that in every aspect the school serves as a witness to the Catholic faith. It is an exciting and rewarding experience to rejoin the school community from this very different perspective. Governors are supposed to be 'critical friends'; working out how to develop this role is going to be a very interesting new journey for all those recently recruited.

Clare Hopkins, Foundation Governor

Farewell from the Student President

As I sign off from my role as Student President, I can't help but reflect on the incredible journey my team and I have had.

We've navigated challenges, celebrated victories, and, most importantly, fostered a spirit of unity that defines the Oaklands community.

It has been an honour to witness the strength that emerges when we stand together, supporting each other through thick and thin, and how we have strengthened the influence of the leaders in the school.

I would like to thank the Student Leadership Team, our Heads; Blessing, Gabby, Libby, and Claudia as well as our amazing Secretary, Delia. Thank you for the time, ideas, and energy you have all put in to make the school community even better. Your commitment and dedication has been the backbone of our successes.



I wish our new President Larisa, and Vice President Emily, an amazing time. Get ready for a rollercoaster; embrace the chaos, cherish the victories, and don't forget to laugh along the way. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to the entire student body, teachers, staff, and administrators for your unwavering support and dedication. Our accomplishments, big and small, are a testament to the collective effort and passion that courses through the veins of Oaklands Catholic School.

It's been an honour to serve as Student President. This role has allowed me to grow so much as a person, whether it be my confidence, public speaking skills or even my leadership and teamwork skills. I got the opportunity to grow and learn with my team and leave with a sense of pride in what we've achieved together. As I bid farewell to this chapter, I carry with me the indelible memories and lessons learned during my time as President. Oaklands will always hold a special place in my heart.

It has been a privilege and a great honour.

Leona Newman, Student President (2023-2024)

Year 12 Geography Trip to Dorset 2024

The advancement of Geographical skills, studying coastal case studies and experiencing fieldwork were the reasons for the recent trip to the Isle of Purbeck for our Year 12 Geography students.

The students were accompanied by Mr Godwin, Mrs Sykes and Mr Bamford and stayed at Swanage YHA.

Day 1: Students studied how coastal management has been conducted along Christchurch Bay from Hengistbury Head to Hurst Castle Spit. The cliffs at Barton-On-Sea and Highcliffe suffer from rotational slumping and this location is quoted in almost every textbook, so it was really useful for our students to actually see what was happening there.



Following a brief lunch stop at Mudeford spit, students drove through Bournemouth and on to Studland via the Sandbanks ferry. The students studied the sand dunes there and tested the concept of vegetation succession and how effective management is in preserving them. Late in the afternoon, the geology of the Purbeck coast was explored as the students were shown Old Harry Rocks at the chalk headland of Handfast Point.

Day 2: The Geology along the coast from Exmouth in Devon to Old Harry Rocks in Dorset has resulted in the area being branded a 'UNESCO World Heritage site' which puts the area on a par with the Grand Canyon and the Great Barrier Reef. Students explored Durdle Door, Lulworth Cove and Stair Hole, although the highlight of the trip this year was the boat tour from Lulworth Cove to Durdle Door. The group visited Portland Bill, discussed the raised beach there and examined Chesil Beach which connects the island of Portland to the mainland. We also visited Poundbury on the outskirts of Dorchester. Poundbury is an experimental new town/extension of Dorchester, with a design endorsed by King Charles on whose land it is built.

Day 3: The final morning was spent around Swanage. The students surveyed the groynes along the beach to see if they were effective in building up the beach and examined rates of longshore drift.

The trip was designed to provide students with data and skills for their coursework report which is worth 20% of their A Level.

Mr Bamford



The Oaklands Way

Catholic Social Teaching Principles: Charism and Community

Over the last term, we have been focusing on the school's Mission Statement and its values of Community, Unity and Opportunity.

Charism underpins the spirit of the community. It is like a powerful energy that permeates through the members of the community and is visible through our actions and words.

We can demonstrate charism by being humble, making good use of our talents, by deeds of charity, hospitality, respecting others and acts of kindness.

We can guide others, teach others, lead others, and encourage others.

All of these are ways of us expressing our charism 'United by The Cross' and 'The Oaklands Way' is how we remind ourselves of what is important to us, that we are called 'to love and serve others.' We also remind ourselves of our mission as disciples of Jesus by making the sign of The Cross.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.

World without end.

Amen.

OFPA Update

SUMMER RAFFLE

The Oaklands Friends' and Parents' Association will be holding an online Summer Raffle next half term.

If anyone can donate items for prize hampers - a Summer Pamper Hamper, a Summer Family Holiday Hamper (beach towel, books, games, magazines etc) and a Summer Tasty Treats Hamper - please bring these into our White House Reception or send in with your child to Student Services.

Details of raffle tickets and dates for the draw will be shared soon.

PROM ATTIRE SALE

We are again planning to hold a sale for Prom attire, including dresses, suits and accessories in October 2024, which we hope will attract and help next year's Year 11 students and parents.

Further details will be published soon, but parents will also have the opportunity to sell suitable items, setting their own reserve price, with a small percentage fee for the OFPA.

If you would like to receive more information about this event, please complete the form via the link below:

[Prom Attire Sale Interest Form](#)

SECOND-HAND UNIFORM

We always welcome any good quality, a clean uniform which can be donated for re-sale. This can be handed into our Reception at the White House or can be brought into Student Services by your child.

Year 11 students may also bring uniforms into school on Results Collection Day, Thursday 22nd August and leave in the Sixth Form Reception.

Thank you for your continued support – our next meeting is on Monday 3rd June at 7.30pm in the Sixth Form Block, and all are welcome to attend.



50:50 CLUB

Our 50:50 Club has been running for a number of years and has been a successful fundraiser, as well as providing a monthly cash prize to a randomly selected member of the club.

However, more recently the number of parents joining has dwindled, and after discussions at the last two OFPA Meetings and a unanimous vote at the May Meeting, followed by further consultation with Mr Quinn and the Governors, the decision has been made to close the Club at the end of August 2024. All members will be contacted by the OFPA and any credits that have been paid in advance of August will be refunded.

The remaining money in the 50:50 account will be used to benefit the school community and it is hoped that the OFPA can work with the School Council to identify a suitable project.

School Community Mass

The next Community Mass at Oaklands School will be on 7th June at 8.00am.

We will celebrate this early morning Mass in our Chapel and are extending a warm welcome to the wider Catholic community. The celebration will finish around 8.30am. If you are unfamiliar with the school layout and location of the chapel, the entrance can be found on the left-hand side of the White House.

We look forward to seeing you.



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