



Oaklands News

Issue 459, Challenge Week Special



Community - Unity - Opportunity

From the Headteacher's Desk

The curriculum at Oaklands includes all the experiences planned and offered both in the classroom and outside of it. We believe that all students should be able to have life and live it to the full, and the extra-curricular offer plays a fundamental role in this. Activities provide a platform for students to pursue their passions, talents and interests outside the regular academic curriculum. Whether playing rugby or being part of a chess team, these activities allow students to explore new areas and develop skills. They build positive relationships with each other and staff, fostering camaraderie and teamwork among peers and across year groups, promoting social interaction and building lasting friendships.

Challenge Week removes all barriers, allowing all students to get involved, be it on-site, visiting local attractions, camping, or going abroad. At Oaklands, the Challenge Week experience works so well, not only because students enter into the spirit of it but also because staff members give up their time without counting the cost. If you take a group of students away on a residential, you are, in effect, on duty 24-7. So, a massive thank you to all who took part and the staff for making the week so enjoyable and memorable.

Year 7: Conservation & Culture

Year 7 began Challenge Week with a trip to Marwell Zoo, exploring biodiversity, environmental conservation and the protection of various endangered species.



Our focus on conservation provided us with the perfect opportunity to consider what we as a society can do to protect our ecosystem and these majestic animals from going extinct.

Here are some comments from Year 7 students:

We had a great time when we went to Marwell Zoo during Challenge Week, as we saw loads of interesting animals, such as giraffes, rhinos and even wild flamingos prancing around! Our week was full of activities focusing on the importance of conservation, African dancing and drumming, making masks, poems – all sorts of fun things to do!

Student, 7VP

'On Monday, we all set off for a day at Marwell Zoo! We got to walk around as a group, looking at all the animals and taking pictures. Tuesday to Thursday was full of fun sessions. We got to make animal masks, top trump cards, and learn calligraphy, which helped us to learn about biodiversity, conservation and free writing (my favourite). Also, we were very lucky to have people come in and teach us some West African dancing and drumming!'

Maisy, 7VP

It truly was an enthralling week, and the energy, enthusiasm and zeal that year 7 offered throughout made for a memorable and cultured Challenge Week. Bring on next year!

Mr Osbourne



Year 8: STEM, Murder Mysteries & Thorpe Park Fun

Challenge Week for Year 8 provided an engaging and comprehensive exploration into the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).



In the Design workshops, students collaborated in teams to create a variety of products intended as souvenirs for Thorpe Park. The level of creativity, modelling, sketching, and construction skills displayed was outstanding. Students were then asked to price their souvenirs, and some prices rivalled the dizzying height of Thorpe Park's roller coasters!

The Maths sessions had Year 8 students deciphering coded diary entries employing orienteering skills, and using trundle wheels to measure distances in order to calculate times and verify the alibis of suspects. In Science, students experienced forensic science first-hand by dissecting a heart, even though its origins (human or otherwise) were left ambiguous.

On Thursday, students ventured to Thorpe Park to experience the UK's tallest and fastest roller coaster, Hyperia, along with the thrills of Stealth, Colossus the 120-foot-tall Detonator. The students represented the school admirably, demonstrating excellent behaviour and showing commendable preparation for the hot and sunny weather, which helped several students dry off from the water rapids before returning to the coach.

Mr Gorman



Year 9 Camp

During Challenge week, some of our Year 9 students travelled to Tile Barn, Brockenhurst. The activities included a short hike through the New Forest where students learnt or developed their ability to navigate using a map, compass and route card. This would allow them to self-navigate a route before taking on the infamous Long Hike. Most groups, including staff, successfully navigated their way around the walk. Other activities included crate stacking, abseiling, climbing, mountain biking, low ropes and nightline. Thank you to all the staff who supported the organisation and running of the trip: Mr Smith, Mr Neil, Mrs Mitchell, Mr Semple, Mrs Semple, Mrs Beauvoisin, Mr Marshall, Mr Dawson and Mrs Jones.



Here is a report from a Year 9 student on the trip:

If I had to rate camp I would give it five stars. Not only did I enjoy the activities but I also got to know my fellow students on a more personal level. Year 9 camp taught me many valuable lessons, such as how to read a compass, enhance my orienteering skills, and not leave your food out in the open! It also helped me step outside my comfort zone and try new things I've never tried, like rock climbing and abseiling. My favourite memory was our last afternoon together. When everyone had returned from the hike, we were all in need of some fun when our water fight started! It was a perfect way to cool down and bond with people you never thought you would. Then, the best way to top it off was a teacher v student volleyball game. Although the teachers did make us look like absolute rookies, it still was a bunch of fun. I would recommend the camp to everyone, it was an opportunity of a lifetime. If I could go back, I would.

Elizabeth Cullimore



Year 9: Field Trips, Treasure Hunts & Survival Skills

The week started with a "Multilingual Quest", where students tackled the challenge of translating texts from various languages and raced against the clock to uncover a secret password. Students also channelled their artistic talents into designing team flags. They enjoyed a session on conflict resolution, equipping students with essential skills in communication and mediation – a valuable asset for both academic and personal life.



Tuesday saw Geographers embark on a trip to Hayling Island, where they engaged in a practical groyne survey, followed by an orienteering course at Staunton Park. History students, meanwhile, delved into the rich past of our local area by exploring Portchester Castle and Fort Nelson.

Wednesday focused on analysis and presentation. Returning from their field trips brimming with data, students meticulously examined their findings, transforming them into informative posters. This process honed their analytical skills and encouraged creative expression as they presented their work in an engaging format.

On Thursday students ventured outdoors to construct shelters on the cricket field. This challenge required them to apply their problem-solving skills in a practical setting, working collaboratively to build sturdy structures. The day culminated in a celebratory barbecue, with hot dogs and marshmallows.

Mrs Broadway



Year 8: French

Fantasy

Forty-seven Year 8 students visited France during Challenge Week and stayed at the charming Château Du Baffy.

The trip started with discovering the world of snail farming at Les Escargots De L'don; many L'donents tried a snail or two, and the

reviews were mostly very positive! From there, students travelled to Les Vergers de Ducy cider farm, where they learnt about the whole process of making apple juice, again with lots of samples to enjoy with lunch.



The group had a wonderful visit to Mont-St-Michel on Tuesday. The weather was beautiful, and students enjoyed the slow climb through picturesque streets. The building was started in medieval times and made us realise how skilled the builders were. The views from the top were stunning!

On their third day, students used their best French to help them order items at the market, followed by a snack outside the beautiful Bayeux Cathedral. From there, they travelled to the 'Chèvrerie Du Mesnil' to learn about producing goat's cheese, had many cuddles and even took photos with the goats! We finished the day at Arromaches, where Mrs Cunningham taught us about the importance of the area, which looked beautiful after the D-Day 80th Anniversary commemorations.

On their final day, the students visited the British World War II memorial in Normandy. There was a stunning and moving installation for the 80th commemoration, and the students took time to look around. They were incredibly respectful of others and got a lot out of the visit.

Mrs Over



The Oaklands Way

Catholic Social Teaching: Common Good

This is the belief that 'every person deserves to have what they need to lead a good life' and suggests that each of us contributes to the well being of others in the community. As we journey towards the end of the year, I think this is a good principle to focus on - how have we participated in our school work this year? Have you done your best in lessons - participated as you should?

It is a fitting principle for us to end the year on.

- Each one of us make the Oaklands Community.
- We all play an important role in ensuring that this is a good place to work and learn.
- Thank you for putting this principle into practice.
- We wish you all a wonderful and restful summer holiday.

Oaklands is a community with a mission statement that leaves no-one behind. This year, we designed a new mission statement poster to help remind everyone of its importance here at Oaklands.

Teachers and support staff strive to ensure that pupils achieve the best outcomes and that they are presented with opportunities and resources to enrich their lives. As a community we also think of the needs of the wider community through fundraising and charitable deeds.

Over the summer, think of what you can do to ensure that our mission continues at Oaklands so that we match the fantastic achievements of this school year and stretch beyond.



Father God,

As we come to the end of this academic year, our hearts are filled with gratitude. We thank You for the gift of life itself, for every breath we take, and for the abundance that surrounds us.

Thank You for the love of family and friends, for the warmth of their presence, and for the bonds that unite us. We cherish the moments of laughter, the shared joys, and the comfort of their love.

Lord, we thank You for the challenges we have faced, for through them, we have grown stronger and wiser. We recognise that even in difficult times, Your grace sustains us, and Your love never wavers.

Amen.

Oaklands

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