



Community - Unity - Opportunity

From the Headteacher's Desk

November is often regarded as a unique month within the Church calendar, almost resembling its own distinct liturgical season. This month serves as a time for reflection and prayer for the souls of the departed, inviting contemplation on the body of Christ and the promise of eternal life. The liturgical practices during November carry a distinct essence that hints at the upcoming celebrations in December, while simultaneously reminding us of our human mortality. It is particularly significant for our Catholic community, as we dedicate time to pray for those who have passed away, with notable observances such as All Saints and All Souls Day before we move on to the Solemnity of Christ the King at the end of the month.

Upon entering the White House, visitors will be immediately drawn to the poignant display of remembrances arranged by the History department, with special acknowledgment to Dr Colvin for her efforts. Images from this display are available on our social media platforms. Earlier today, we observed a two minute silence accompanied by the playing of the Last Post. Educating children about the significant historical events of the past not only honours those sacrifices but also inspires a commitment to a future where such sacrifices are not forgotten. By discussing the importance of Remembrance Day, we instil in young minds an understanding of history's relevance and the vital necessity of fostering peace.

Mr Quinn, Headteacher

Culture Week Show

The week of 21st to 25th October was very special at Oaklands – it was Culture Week, a time when members of our community were invited to think about their cultural identity and find ways to celebrate it. Each person belongs to a culture, and every community is underpinned by its culture. At Oaklands, our culture is captured and summarised in our mission statement,

Community Unity Opportunity. All three of our mission statement branches were on display throughout Culture Week in a very unique way.

Oaklands is a community where individuals are valued for who they are, their voices are heard and treasured, and their individuality is celebrated. We offer each person an 'opportunity' to flourish – to be the best version of themselves. This is what our celebration of culture week is about.

Four things that are central to many cultures are dress, language, food and dance/music. During this week, members of our community shared food and snacks from different cultures. The MFL department organised language lessons for some of the languages spoken at Oaklands (we have over 60 languages represented here).

On Friday, we had music, dance and catwalks to showcase our different cultures. We had two shows during the day and an evening performance where we invited members of our families and friends to come and witness our celebration.

We asked a few students why they decided to take part in the events of this week. Here are a sample of their responses:

'To represent my culture and also because I hadn't seen an East Asian performance or Chinese catwalk in the past years.'

Abigail

'It might be my last year at Oaklands and I wanted to celebrate my culture with the friends I have made throughout the years.'

Jimnah



'I wanted to express my culture and teach everyone about it. I also just wanted to have a good time.'

Josephine

'I decided to take part in the culture show this year because I'm not nervous about showing my culture anymore, and I wanted to represent my country.'

Thomas

'I'm in Year 11 and felt like I hadn't done enough in the school participation-wise. Also to have fun with my friends and help out because I'm a student leader. I think it is important to celebrate each other's culture and learn from it.'

Miriam

'I wanted to show my culture and its beauty to the school, which I don't get many chances to do.'

Mishelin

This week is unique in that it is something that was started by the students and is, on the whole, organised by the students, led by the Charism Team. Well done to our Charism Team leaders, Jeffrey and Ashley, plus the Year 13 student leaders, as well as the Year 11 and 12 student leaders who helped put together the events of this week - It is a truly remarkable week at our school.

No sooner have we concluded one year, and I am already getting requests from students asking if they can take part next year. We continue to challenge our students to find what is unique to them; what is their culture, and then to be able to share it with the rest of the community. We are very proud of our diversity.

Mr Sumba

St John's Week

The final week of Autumn Term 1 marks our inaugural celebration and partnership of our wider community with St John's school in Korogocho. During this week, we fundraise to support our brothers and sisters in Kenya, supporting and sponsoring children to attend school.

The week began with a Staff vs Sixth Form netball match to pay homage to the success of St John's who were crowned Nairobi Basketball Champions and second in the national competition. The students' success at St John's inspired the Oaklands staff as they successfully defeated the Sixth Form student team 6-1. On Tuesday, each Year 7 tutor group had the opportunity to speak with the children and staff of St John's via video call sessions in the Chapel. This involved a Q&A session, writing postcards to the students of St John's, a tour of the school with the Headteacher, Mr Stephen Mwangi, and singing hymns – both in English and in Swahili. It was a true joy to behold and something the students of Oaklands will cherish throughout their journey through the school.

The rest of the week consisted of a tombola in the library, a colossal cake sale, designing St John's tote bags, a penalty shootout and culminating in a non-uniform day for all the students and staff. The week has been a roaring success and one which has reinvigorated our shared love and unity with St John's, who ended their week with their class graduation – celebrating the achievements of all their students and passing through the next grade/year group before the summer break (over Christmas).

Thank you for your continued support of St John's and we look forward to strengthening our wider community further.

Mr Osbourne



Medjugorje Pilgrimage

During half term, a group of Year 9 and Year 10 students, along with Mr and Mrs Semple and Mrs Vary joined parishioners from the Sacred Heart in Waterloo on pilgrimage to Medjugorje, a town in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There has been a Catholic pilgrimage site in Medjugorje since 1981, when six locals claimed to see apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Known as "Our Lady of Medjugorje," these apparitions conveyed messages of peace, prayer, and conversion.



The Holy Spirit is alive in Medjugorje and Our Lady is truly present encouraging us to come back to her Son Jesus and spread Peace, peace, peace.

The students enjoyed the pilgrimage very much. When asked what was good about the trip, some of the students said:

We had many opportunities on this trip, including climbing Apparition Hill, visiting St Anthony's Church and Kravica Waterfall, which was absolutely freezing but an amazing experience. We also went to Vicka's (who was one of the six visionaries that Our Lady appeared to) house, swimming in the Adriatic Sea, going to confession and adoration of Our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the final activities we did was climb to the top of Cross Mountain whilst praying the rosary on the way up. I am very thankful that our Mother called me to come to Medjugorje and hope she does the same in the future."

Lily, Year 10



The Oaklands Way

Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day has its roots in Armistice Day, which was first commemorated in Great Britain on 11th November 1919, to mark the one-year anniversary of the peace agreement that ended the First World War. After the conclusion of the Second World War, the British government, seeking to honour participants in both World Wars, officially replaced Armistice Day with the new Sunday observance, which was thereafter known as Remembrance Sunday.

In 1956 the date was fixed as the second Sunday of the month of November.

How do we honour Remembrance Day at Oaklands?

Outside the White House you will see the History Department display. You will see lots of poppies that have messages from staff at Oaklands but also our Year 9 students who are currently learning about the First World War in their History lessons.

You will also see four display boards. These are really important as they inform you of people closely connected to the school and their actions in the First World War:

Edward Ingouville Williams, Miss Emily Caroline Napier, Private Jess Coppin, The Ladies of Waterloooville and the Flags of the East Yorkshire Regiment.



CST Principles: Human Dignity

This week we remember those who sacrificed their lives so that we could have peace. These people fought and many lost their lives because they were protecting the dignity of others.

How are you contributing to making Oaklands a place where the dignity of each person is respected?

Heavenly Father

You have created each of us in Your image, bestowing upon us an inherent dignity that cannot be diminished.

Help us, Lord, to recognise and honour this sacred gift in every person we encounter.

Grant us the courage to uphold the vision of human dignity in our daily lives. Inspire our hearts to tend to the needs of others, especially those who are marginalised, oppressed, and suffering. Empower us with Your Spirit to respond to injustice with compassion and resolve.

May our actions reflect Your love and mercy, bringing comfort and hope to those in need.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.



School Dinner Week - Special Menu



This **WEEK'S MENU**



MONDAY: Chinese chicken curry or Vegetable stir fry

with rice or noodles and spring rolls

TUESDAY: Italian pizzas

with garlic bread and salad

WEDNESDAY: Indian Beef balti or chicken tikka or Vegetable jalfrezi

with rice and Indian sides

THURSDAY: Wild west salt & chilli pulled chicken burger or Vegetable quarter pounder

with BBQ beans and wedges

FRIDAY: British Fish or Meat or Vegetable pie

with chips

Main Meal	£2.95
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with sides but no dessert

Jacket Potato	£2.30
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with one topping (+£1 for extra toppings)

Pitstop Meal Deal	£2.95
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Soup and Roll	£1.55
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Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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