



Community - Unity - Opportunity

From the Headteacher's Desk

At last we have had a period of better weather, it lifts the spirit of us all. Across the school site there are examples of joyous spring flowers. Easter flowers hold deep symbolic and cultural significance, representing themes of renewal, hope, and rebirth. We embark upon Lent as we embark upon life, starting no doubt with good intentions and aspirations, soon to be challenged by temptation, not unlike Jesus' time in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights. But because He endured such an experience, we can know that He is with us every stumbling and dancing step of our way. Last week Key Stage 3 students had an opportunity to experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation, my thanks to our clergy for the time they gave to this important sacrament.

Lent is a time where we are encouraged to pray, give something up, or undertake some charitable work. I am cracking on this Lent with a wine starvation diet, every day represents a minor victory such is my absence of strong will. Hopefully there will be a reward at the end of this for CAFOD.

As a child, along with my brother and sister, we used to roll our eyes at each other when our parents would call us all for family dinner. Why would we want to spend our evenings with our parents and whole family at the dinner table? We either felt like it was pointless, boring, or annoying. When I had my own children I realised how important these 'mandatory' family dinners were. It was the one time in all of our days when we, as a family were, present with each other, making eye contact, talking about our days, and most importantly, feeling connected.

Research shows that regular meals as a family positively affect self-esteem, academic performance, and the overall well-being of children and adolescents especially if you enforce a “no phone” policy.

Even if you as a parent receive countless ‘eye rolls’ at the dinner table, remembering how valuable this time is and the fact that at some point it will be the last meal time together – our children grow up fast and move away – meal times have many positive, unintended consequences. Just the fact that you are sitting there with them will model how to be present, and underline the importance of in-person connection and communication with loved ones. Ask how their day was at school, what the best part of their day was, and who they had lunch with or what they did. These little moments have a big impact and can lead to emotional wellbeing with your children.

So, what has all this got to do with Lent, if you have not managed to give something up, if charitable giving is going to stretch the family budget, why not resolve this lent to spend more time with your children, mandatory meal times, if it is not part of family routine, might be a good place to start.

Mr Quinn, Headteacher

Design & Technology GCSE Showcase

On 13th March, the Design Department hosted the annual Design and Technology Showcase, a fantastic event highlighting the talent and dedication of our students.

The showcase provided an opportunity for GCSE students to present their innovative products, sharing their design journeys with peers, parents, and staff. From initial concepts to final creations, the exhibition celebrated the hard work, creativity, and perseverance of our students - each of whom should be incredibly proud of their achievements.

The Design and Technology staff and students are particularly grateful to the OFPA who purchased three fret saws for the Department. These have not only sped up production but helped to improve the quality of the practical outcomes.

This event also enables students to gather feedback about their products from other people, which is the final part of the folder work they have to submit for assessment towards their GCSE. The students all received very positive feedback and the staff were very impressed with not only with the work that was on show, but the positive, honest and reflective way that students spoke about their products.

Mrs Gildea



Careers Week: Alumni Talks

Last week, our students were incredibly fortunate to benefit from the wisdom and experience of our inspiring alumni, who provided invaluable insights into career opportunities.

We started the week with a talk from Mrs Moore of Rocksteady Music School. She demonstrated that a fulfilling career is not always a straight line, encouraging our students to embrace creative thinking and "think outside the box." We also welcomed Lt Cdr Hill from the Royal Navy, who shared his remarkable journey through the ranks. He offered a fascinating glimpse into the opportunities and challenges of a career in the Navy, showcasing the diverse paths available within the armed forces.

Later in the week we were joined by Mrs Stavert and Miss Newton, who provided a comprehensive overview of careers within the NHS, shedding light on the vital work carried out by healthcare professionals. We also heard from Mr Bates and Miss Mae, who shared their career experiences within civil engineering. To conclude the week's series of talks, Mr Perry, CEO of VIVID Homes, shared his inspiring journey into leadership within the housing industry, offering invaluable advice on navigating the world of work and achieving success.

These alumni visits are a cornerstone of our commitment to providing students with a well-rounded education. By hearing firsthand from individuals who have walked similar paths, our students gain a deeper understanding of the possibilities that lie ahead. We are immensely grateful to our alumni for their time and dedication in shaping the future of our students.



Mrs McQuiston



From the Chaplain: Flame Conference 2025

Flame is one of the largest gatherings of young Catholics in the UK, bringing together thousands of young people for a day filled with faith, music, inspiration, and community. Held at the iconic Wembley Arena, the event is a powerful experience that celebrates the vibrancy and unity of the Catholic faith.

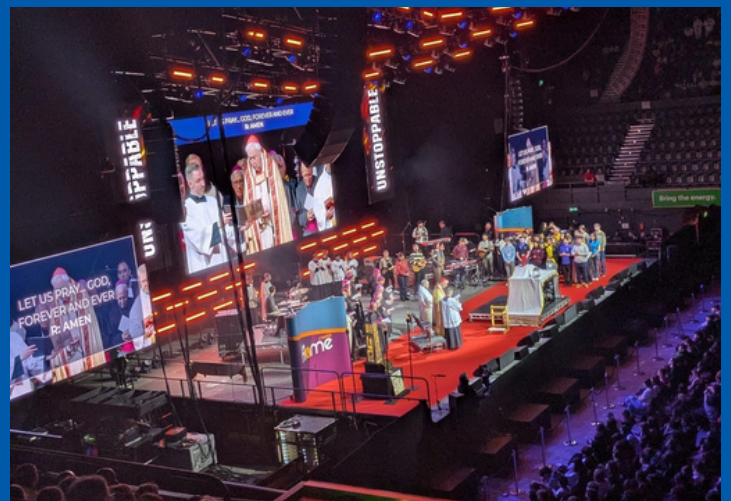


On March 15th, an incredible 10,000 young Catholics from across the country - including students from Oaklands - came together to take part in this unforgettable day. The atmosphere was electric, filled with uplifting music, thought-provoking drama, and inspiring talks designed to deepen faith and encourage young people in their spiritual journey. Oaklands students had the unique privilege of hearing from world-renowned adventurer Bear Grylls, who shared his experiences of resilience, faith, and overcoming challenges. They were also inspired by Isaac Harvey MBE, an extraordinary speaker who shared his story of perseverance and determination, demonstrating that faith and inner strength can help overcome even the toughest obstacles.

Throughout the day, students engaged in moments of reflection and prayer, deepening their connection with their faith. The event culminated in a powerful time of praise and worship led by the One Hope Project, filling the arena with a sense of unity and devotion. The highlight of the evening was a profoundly moving Adoration led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, where thousands joined together in prayer, creating an atmosphere of peace and reverence.

Flame was truly a remarkable experience, leaving all who attended feeling uplifted, inspired, and strengthened in their faith. It was a day of joy, community, and spiritual renewal - one that will surely be remembered for years to come.

Mrs Semple





THE SIXTH FORM

Oaklands Catholic School

News from the Sixth Form

Sixth Former Success

We have so many talented Sixth Formers who do so much in our Oaklands community and beyond. I want to share some of the most recent stories with you.

Congratulations to Andrew Mathew in Year 12, whose entry for the Peter Cane Legal Reasoning Prize for aspiring lawyers was shortlisted within the top 10, classed as Highly Commended. As a result, Andrew has been invited to a Prize Giving Event at Corpus Christi College Oxford.

Well done also to Giacomo in Year 12, who performed superbly in his recent RAF interview and CBAT aptitude test.

Giacomo writes: 'Despite this being extremely difficult, it was an amazing experience, where I was lucky enough to find success. This is mainly due to meeting the requirements, that I have achieved at Oaklands. I would highly recommend anyone to apply. I have gained useful experience and have now done and seen things that most people wouldn't be able to. I'm looking forward to proceeding to the next step'.

I am sure you will join me in congratulating Andrew, Giacomo, and all our students, who are making so much of the opportunities they have at Sixth Form.

Visit to the University of Cambridge

As part of the HE Plus Programme, our Year 12 have attended a series of visits and attended lectures at the University of Cambridge.



Alicia, in Year 12 said:

'The HE+ Cambridge visit was a wonderful opportunity; I experienced lectures from top-class professors in History and English, which has helped towards my university applications. The trip also included a meal at Trinity Hall and a tour guide through the libraries, faculties and different colleges, which allowed us to gain a personal insight into what life at Cambridge would be like!'

Sixth Form – ‘Love and Service’

The Sixth Form has also been busy with its various ‘Love and Service’ initiatives, where we seek to apply our Catholic ethos in practical ways. This includes our ongoing Rowans Hospice visits, which will now include additional sessions that the hospice has asked us to help with.

The Sixth Formers are also busy planning a fundraising ‘PJ and Film’ event to help raise money for good causes.

It is also wonderful to see how many of our Sixth Formers volunteer in schools, residential homes and other care settings. You make us all very proud and demonstrate that we really are a Sixth Form with a soul!

Mr Godwin, Director of Sixth Form

The Oaklands Way

Gospel Reflection

The parable of the fig tree reminds us of the importance of making the most of the time we have. The tree wasn't producing fruit, and the owner considered cutting it down. But the gardener showed patience, giving it one more chance to grow. This teaches us that God is patient with us, but we should also take responsibility for our lives and not waste opportunities to grow and become better people. It is a reminder to take action now, make positive change, and use our time wisely.



What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is the process of restoring broken relationships, whether between individuals, communities or with God. In the Catholic faith, Reconciliation is a sacrament in which a person confesses their sins to a priest, receives absolution, and is reconciled with God and the Church. This sacrament, also called Confession or Penance, is a powerful act of forgiveness, mercy, and spiritual healing.



Catholic Social Teaching - Solidarity

The belief that we are brothers and sisters and belong to each other and must stand up for each other.

St Oscar Romero

Saint Oscar Romero, born in 1917 in El Salvador. Ordained as a priest in 1942, he rose to become Archbishop of San Salvador in 1977. Amidst civil conflict, Romero emerged as a vocal advocate for peace and justice, opposing violence from both right-wing and leftist factions. His unwavering commitment to human rights led to his assassination in 1980 while celebrating Mass. Recognised for his martyrdom, he was beatified in 2015 and canonised as a saint in 2018.



Holy God,

Mighty and immortal, you are beyond our knowing, yet we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ, whose compassion illumines the world.

Transform us into the likeness of the love of Christ, who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his divinity, the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who live and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CAFOD

Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

THE BIG LENT WALK

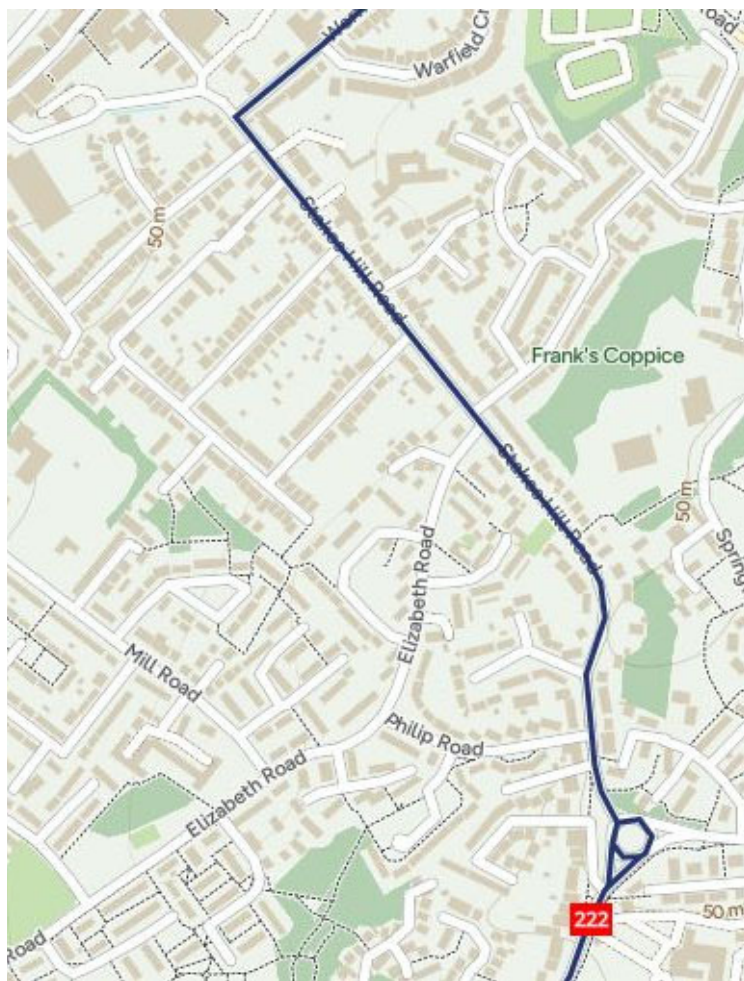
WE ARE RAISING MONEY TO HELP
FIGHT GLOBAL POVERTY



We are
taking
part in the
**BIG LENT
WALK**

Stakes Hill, Waterlooville

Join our co-discover workshops on **2nd & 3rd April 2025**
to create a better environment for walking, wheeling and cycling in
Waterlooville



Sustrans are working with **Hampshire County Council** to improve National Cycle Network (NCN) route 222 along Stakes Hill Road. Turn over to learn more and find out how you can get involved.



Project Overview

Stakes Hill Road is a key route into Waterlooville town centre from areas to the south.

Sustrans and Hampshire County Council would like to improve Stakes Hill Road (NCN 222), to make it better for walking, wheeling and cycling

Get involved

Your experience of using this area is crucial to understanding how to improve it, for everyone.

Come and join a **workshop or contribute online**, to share your experiences and help shape initial designs that we'll use to apply for future funding



Workshop Events and Online Survey

Time: Wednesday 2nd April (3 -5pm)

Location: St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Stakes Hill Rd, PO7 7BP

Time: Thursday 3rd April (6 -8pm)

Location: Springwood Community Centre, 110 Springwood Ave, PO7 8BJ

Time: Thursday 3rd April (12 -2pm)

Location: Waterlooville Library & Learning Centre, The Precinct, PO7 7DT

Take part in our online survey here
From Wednesday 19th March to Sunday 20th April



We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling.

We campaign to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

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Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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