

# Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are all well and have managed to have a good summer break. We look forward to welcoming Year 7 and 12 on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> and the rest of the school on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September.

We want to start the school year as we mean to go on, so a few reminders before we start back are timely. At the end of this letter I have also included a FAQ section related to transport. If you or a member of your family collects a student by car, regularly or occasionally, it is important that you read this information.

## Building Work and Access to Reception

We have been successful in securing a CIF bid to have essential works completed on the White House building and the Sports Hall roof. The project is due to start within the first week of term and this means that the White House will not be accessible.

Our Reception has moved to the new Edith Stein Building located on your left as you come to the top of the main school drive. This is a much smaller space and the waiting area for visitors can only accommodate one person at a time. Please can parents therefore keep visits to school to a minimum, only attending pre-arranged appointments. Due to the relocation of classrooms and support staff offices, we will also have fewer meeting spaces available and where possible, staff will aim to support you with a phone call in lieu of a face-to-face meeting.

Please also note that there will be significantly less parking spaces available and we therefore cannot accommodate any parents parking on site unless they have a pre-arranged meeting and have signed in at Reception.

## Uniform

Uniform is an important part of a school's identity. It reinforces who we are as a community and helps allow students to feel pride in their school. It also helps prepare youngsters for life after school where many will have to dress smartly for work. Uniform also helps members of the wider community form a positive impression of our school and the students who attend.



Community Unity Opportunity



Thank you to all the parents and carers who, last year, worked with the school ensuring that their child leaves home correctly dressed. There are only a few days left to resolve any outstanding issues. The uniform policy also provides information on our expectations for facial piercings, makeup and hair styles. It is important that students return next week in adherence with the policy. Please follow [this link](#) to our website if you require further guidance.

Our uniform policy is clear that no student is allowed to come to school with nail varnish on, this includes gel and acrylic nails. In the past, we have had students come in at the start of term with nails having been done for a summer holiday, wedding or family celebration; once they have returned to school, this is not acceptable, and no pass will be given. If a student comes to school wearing the incorrect uniform and are unable to correct it when asked by a staff member, they will work in our Inclusion Room until they are able to do so.

Coloured enamel year badges are a uniform item and should be worn on your child's blazer. Students in Years 8-11 were issued with one of these last September and, if it is in good condition, they should continue to wear it. We will replace any missing badges and issue Year 7 with new ones in September. Thereafter a lost badge will need to be replaced at a cost; we would therefore encourage students to look after their badge and avoid the need for replacement as this is a cheaper, more sustainable option.

Our uniform policy is available on the website with information about the supply of preloved uniform available from the Oaklands Friends' and Parents' Association (OFPA).

The OFPA welcome any good quality, clean uniform which can be donated for re-sale. This can be handed into our Reception or sent in with your child to Student Services currently both located in the Edith Stein building. Details of the next uniform sale will be published in Oaklands News.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Our attendance figures last year were amongst the highest in the local area, well done for this. However, attendance has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels; there is still more work to be done, so we must not be complacent. The link between good attendance in school and success is well defined. I strongly believe that being punctual to school prepares all students for the day ahead and is good training for life.

School begins at 8.50am and any pupil arriving after this time is technically late. You can monitor your child's attendance and punctuality on ClassCharts; if we see that your child's attendance has fallen below 95% we will write to you to make you aware. Once a child's attendance falls below 90%, they are classed as a persistent absentee and we will be in contact to put support in place to help your child improve their attendance. More information about absence, attendance and punctuality can be found on the school website.

## **Mobile Phones**

You may remember there was a recent significant debate about banning mobile phones from school; I suspect this will continue to run. Due to the distance many of our students travel to get to school, we understand that parents and carers like them to have their mobile phone with them and our mobile phone policy reflects this.

Our current policy can be found on the [website](#). The policy is framed in this way to avoid situations where young people spend yet more time on electronic devices; this does not encourage face to face social interaction, which, I am sure you will agree, is so important for learning social skills as a child grows up.

If your child is in Key Stages 3 and 4, please can you remind them that mobile phones must be turned off, out of sight and not used during the school day. Please monitor the usage of your child's phone in order to ensure that both they and others are safe.

### **School Equipment**

Please can you ensure that your child has all the necessary equipment for learning including a suitable pencil case and calculator. All students should have a reading book, this can be brought in from home or borrowed from the school library.

### **Open Evening, Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September - Early Closure**

Our Open Evening occurs this year on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September. **There will be an early close and finish for the students at 2.45pm so that the school site can be prepared.** We do hope, however, that as many students as possible will stay to be tour guides. Students who volunteer to be guides will receive a free evening meal and we are considering other ways to reward students who help during this important event.

We are currently liaising with the bus companies regarding the possibility of an early pick-up and will confirm final arrangements nearer the time, however, for students who need to stay on site until the end of the normal school day, provision will be made.

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October is an INSET day, the school will be closed to students.

### **Calendar of Events**

This year the calendar will be published on the school website via [this link](#). The dates are correct at the time of publication, so please be aware that there may be occasions where events have to be moved, so it is worth returning to the calendar occasionally.

I would like to thank parents and carers for your ongoing support for the Oaklands community. We look forward to working with you again this year to support all students and ensure they have a successful school year.

Yours sincerely



Mrs A Bonnington  
**Head of School**

## **Transport Related FAQs**

### **Where do I drop my child off in the morning?**

Children should be dropped off on the school drive by the bus shelters. Please note that this is a 'drop off' area only as access is required by buses and other parents. Please only use the visitors' car parks if you have an appointment or need to visit Reception. No parking is permitted in other areas of the school.

### **What time do students finish?**

At the end of the day, the dismissal of Key Stages will be staggered (KS3 at 3.25pm, KS4 and KS5 at 3.30pm). Students will be escorted down the drive by their class teachers. Students will need to leave the school site as soon as their day ends in order to clear the buildings. Students should go straight home. Key Stage 3 students will be permitted to board buses as soon as they arrive. In the event of bad weather and a known delay to buses, students will be given the option of waiting in the Hall.

### **What time are the school gates open?**

The school gates will not open until 3.50pm, as the buses need to vacate the drive. Please do not try to park in front of the school gate before 3.50pm as you could obstruct buses that are trying to enter the site.

### **What time do the buses arrive?**

The buses should be on site by 3.20pm ready for the first students. If a bus is late, the school will contact the bus company.

### **If I am collecting my child by car where do I pick them up from?**

You will drive on to the school site at 3.50pm (no earlier), around the roundabout then back down the drive. The pick-up point is on the playing field side of the drive. Parents must not stop on the bus shelter side of the driveway or on the roundabout.

### **Where can I park locally to wait for my child?**

Parking approximately 10 minutes walk away from the school site is the best option if you are picking up your child by car. Please park with consideration for local residents. If you park in roughly the same area each time your child will become familiar with this. You will then be on your way by approximately 3.40pm rather than waiting until 3.50pm for the gates to open.

### **Am I permitted to collect my child from the school site on foot?**

No: the school drive is very busy and parents will need to wait outside of the gates.