



**Date: Friday 19th December**

## **End of term update and newsletter - Mr Gerrard Deputy Headteacher**

Dear Oakbank School Community,

It has been a fantastic term for Oakbank School. We are incredibly proud of how our students have started their own journey to the top of their personal mountains to the very best universities and professions. It is amazing to reflect on how far the entire school community has come since September, laying down firm, positive foundations that embody the schools commitment to 'Work Hard and Be Kind' with high standards and ambition for every young person.

The hard work, driven by our belief in continuous learning, certainly doesn't stop here. We will continue to build on this success in the new term. However, it is vital to pause and celebrate some key highlights from the year so far.

A personal highlight that truly captured the spirit of Oakbank School was the Open Evening. The positive energy we shared with the community was infectious. It was brilliant seeing our existing students being fantastic ambassadors, having such interesting and informative conversations with prospective students. They articulated their pride in their school and demonstrated the supportive and inclusive learning environment we cherish.

Another key success that underscores our commitment to no ceiling on achievement has to be the Year 11 mock exams. Our students have been truly exemplary, demonstrating the exceptional self-discipline required for success, working diligently on their independent study and homework. We are ambitious for our Year 11 group and know they will be going on to achieve brilliant things in the future. Thank you for the amazing turn out to Y11 Raising Attainment evening, a great show of collaboration between students, parents and school staff building on a solid foundation to ensure our Y11 cohort reach the top of their own personal mountains.

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Lastly, as ever, it is a joy to come to school every day because of the friendliness, kindness, and politeness of our students, and their participation in enrichment and Fun Friday events. The fantastic feedback we receive—such as students being described as 'well behaved, polite and a pleasure to work with' by external partners, including the team running the flu vaccinations—is a direct reflection of the strong values we uphold.

## Inset days and Calendar

We have 2 inset days on the 5th and 6th of January 2026 where the school will not be open to students.

The whole year group for Year 11 and individual portrait photographs for Year 7 and Year 11 will take place on Monday 12th January by the 'School Photography Company'.

If you do not wish for your child to be included in the Year 11 group photo then please email [contact@oakbankschool.co.uk](mailto:contact@oakbankschool.co.uk) Students will be given a card to take home once they have been photographed with details of how orders can be placed.

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## Staffing

We are delighted to welcome Dr Gareth Mills to our school community as our new Assistant Headteacher for Teaching & Learning. Alongside his senior leadership responsibilities, Dr Mills will also be teaching English.

Also joining us next term is Ms Emma Doyle, who will be taking up the position of Head of English. Ms Doyle brings with her a wealth of experience in English teaching and curriculum development, and we are delighted to welcome her to the team

## Top Merit Earners

### Congratulations to our top merit earners of the term across the school

Name	Year	Score
Palwasha A	8	1457
Theo N	8	1345
Noah N	8	1344
Olivia C	9	1291
Jack A	7	1267

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### **Congratulations to our top merit earners of the term in Each Year Group**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Jack A</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1267</b>
<b>Palwasha A</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1457</b>
<b>Olivia C</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1291</b>
<b>Umaima A</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1040</b>
<b>Cian M</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>857</b>

## **Fun Friday and Rewards Report**

Our dedication to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment is clearly demonstrated through our robust rewards program.

Fun Friday has been a massive success, promoting collaboration and a spirit of healthy competition. We've seen great participation with smiles all around in events like The 1% Club, Paper Airplane Challenge, Just Dance, Red Light Green Light, Christmas Karaoke and Gingerbread making. This is a vital and fun part of the week that we know students eagerly anticipate.

We strongly believe in celebrating and rewarding students for doing the right thing and demonstrating the high standards we uphold. This term, our commitment to positive reinforcement included:

Giving out over 100 £5 vouchers for improved or perfect attendance.

Hosting two exciting pizza parties for students who achieved 100% attendance, reflecting the Trust's value of commitment.

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## Behaviour and Values:

Rewarding 95 students with Student of the Week (SOW) recognition and a free lunch.

Organising two fantastic Gold trips to Wokingham Superbowl and Oxygen, two Silver inflatable events, and four Oakbank Cinema experiences for those students who consistently demonstrate the core values of 'Work Hard and Be Kind'.

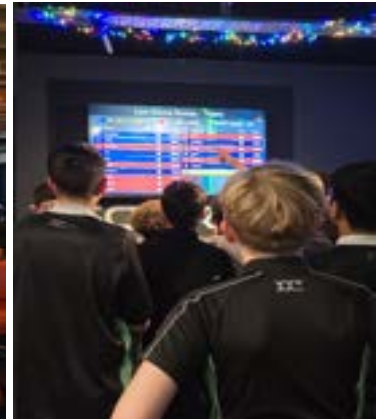
Hosting two Hot Chocolate Fridays and distributing multiple rewards for tutor groups and students demonstrating the best behaviour and attendance.

These rewards actively reinforce the positive culture we are building, and we can't wait to start again next term, continuing to encourage all students to meet their personal ambitions.

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## Sports Fixtures

This term has seen Oakbank students participate in a variety of sporting fixtures. We have competed in girls football, boys football, KS4 badminton and Netball. It has been lovely to see students engaging in a variety of sports, and we look forward to more students getting involved in different sports in the new term.

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## Enrichment Clubs - Autumn Term Review

### Dungeons & Dragons

After successfully completing their last quest, and defeating the evil hags, the members of Dungeons & Dragons levelled up their characters to level 3 - new spells, more spell slots and more health. Unfortunately this could mean greater foes to face too.

### Crochet Club

This term, the Crochet club has got to grips with the basics of crochet: chaining, learning double crochet and beginning their first project - mittens for the cool weather. Next term we shall be looking at trying some Amigurumi crochet which is the Japanese art of crochet for creating characters and figures. Any donations of yarn or crochet hooks would be greatly appreciated

### Book Club

This term Book Club has been reviewing a variety of books for different publishers.

Next term we shall begin to shadow the Carnegie awards as the longlists are announced as well as looking at how to create interesting book displays in the library and taking photographs of them for different publishing houses.

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### **Cooking Crew**

This term the Cooking Crew have enjoyed making pitta pizzas, cheese scones, pasta salad, stir fry noodles and decorating cupcakes. Developing great skills for the future.

### **Art Club**

Our Art Club students have been busy exploring new creative techniques this term. They've designed imaginative sculptural pots inspired by animals, experimenting with texture form and functionality. They've also been testing vibrant tie-dye samples in preparation for our upcoming cushion-making project. Their enthusiasm and playful experimentation really shines through in the work produced.

### **History Club**

The History Club has had such a great first term! It has been brilliant to have more time with our Year 10 GCSE students who are really going above and beyond to invest in their knowledge and skills. We are truly building confidence with exam skills in a fun, relaxed way and getting that exam-style practice without the pressure. It is also a great opportunity to revisit tricky GCSE topics, ask questions freely, and learn alongside friends who share the same desire to succeed, making it both enjoyable and valuable for success in their GCSE course. We have had such a great time and are excited to keep going next term!

### **Stem Club Eureka!**

Our budding scientists have been exploring factors affecting buoyancy, which include density, volume, shape and gravitational acceleration! Students have had the opportunity to perform experiments such as 'dancing raisins', making their own cartesian diver using paper clips, nail, syringe and pen caps, building structures of simple and complex molecules using molymods, and creating their own nocturnal clock following a session about how to navigate using stars. Another highlight is the Eureka club's remarkable team building competition, where students were challenged to pick various items without touching them by hand after learning about electrostatic forces. Students enjoyed engaging with puzzle activities, such as sequencing events in the history of the universe, creation of life, and scientific inventions that helped humans explore Space. Eureka students have been on a noble quest to discover all creative and fun ways of grappling with science!

### **PE Extra curricular activities**

In PE we have offered a variety of activities, including Table Tennis, Dance, Basketball, Football and Netball. It has been nice seeing more students attending clubs and representing the school. Whether students attend to improve their skills or because they enjoy the activity, it is nice to see a variety of students engaging across the week.

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## Enrichment Club Gallery



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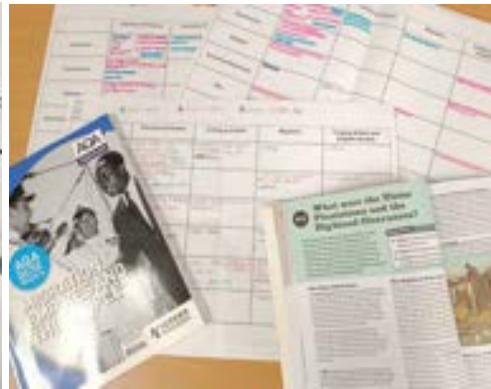
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## Greenshaw Learning Trust Winter concert

Huge congratulations to Gabriella A who represented Oakbank school at the GLT Winter concert. Such a brave act to perform her spoken word piece in front of so many people. So much positive feedback about her 'electrifying performance' and we are all so proud and hope this encourages more performances next year.



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## Tutor Time Reading Programme

This Autumn term, our Tutor Time Reading Programme has been a wonderful success, with every tutor group diving into at least three books. It has been inspiring to see students discovering new stories, expanding their vocabulary, and building confidence with every chapter. Next term, we're excited to continue this journey with a vibrant new collection of books from different parts of the world, exploring a range of genres, themes, and characters. Giving young people access to such variety helps them connect with different experiences, broaden their horizons, and find real joy in reading. So far, our students have read:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<i>Wonder</i>	<i>I am Malala</i>	<i>Starseeker</i>	<i>Guards, Guards!</i>
<i>You are a Champion</i>	<i>Chinese Cinderella</i>	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	<i>Poet X</i>
<i>The Boy Who Fell from the Sky</i>	<i>Private Peaceful</i>	<i>Furia</i>	<i>Hidden Figures</i>
<i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i>	<i>What Happens Online</i>	<i>Skulduggery Pleasant</i>	<i>Little Bang</i>
	<i>You are Awesome</i>	<i>Crossing the Line</i>	<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime</i>
	<i>Sherlock Holmes - short stories</i>	<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	<i>Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>
			<i>Life of Pi</i>

With the National Year of Reading 2026 on the horizon—a major UK initiative led by the Department for Education and the National Literacy Trust—we are proud that our Tutor Time Reading Programme already reflects this national commitment to helping young people “Go All In” with reading. By linking our daily reading routine to this wider campaign, we hope to further inspire students to discover books that connect with their interests and make reading an enjoyable, meaningful part of their everyday lives.

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