



[Please find a video summary here:](#)

**Date: 22nd May 2026**

**RE: End of Term**

Dear Oakbank School Community,

What a fantastic term we have had again, with so much progress from the whole community, inside the classroom and physically with the building itself. Today marks my fifth month as Headteacher of Oakbank. Every day, the staff and I gain further insights into just how far your local secondary school has come, and what is needed to make this the kindest and most hard-working school in Wokingham – a journey we are thoroughly enjoying and for which we have set some very solid foundations. This term, staff have been set the task of knowing every single student's name when asked. When a student simply asks the question, they earn a positive point towards our rewards at the end of term. This has created some lovely conversations, smiles and insights into the students' lives, and it has been one of the most enjoyable challenges this half term for both staff and students, significantly increasing a sense of being known. I have learnt so much about our students outside the classroom through this challenge, and I look forward to similar initiatives as we progress that will continue to strengthen student-teacher relationships.

On Thursday of this week, we hosted a pizza and quiz night to welcome our new Year 6 cohort and their families to our community. It was great fun, and brilliant to see some familiar faces as well as to meet many students, parents and carers for the first time. I was very impressed by the knowledge and enthusiasm of our students-to-be, and it was wonderful hearing from them about how they are feeling ahead of September, combined with some words of wisdom and encouragement from our fantastic Year 7 volunteers.

Huge congratulations go to all our Year 11 students as we reach the end of the first full two weeks of exams. It has been a true community effort: students have been working phenomenally hard; kitchen staff have been providing early lunches and prepping the free breakfasts that our local community and charities helped provide every morning for our breakfast warm-up sessions; teaching staff have been coming in early to give students that all-important pre-exam confidence boost; teachers have been running additional lessons to target support in key areas; and I know that parents, carers, siblings and grandparents have been supporting at home, helping our students manage stress levels, look after themselves and get to school on time every day. All our students have been exemplary, a true credit to themselves, their families and our school. We are so grateful to everyone who has been involved in getting our students to where they are today. More of the same next week! Wishing you a wonderful weekend, and looking forward to one more busy week before half term.

Mr Rob Gerrard, Headteacher

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In teaching and learning this week, after nearly nine months of adding key components to teaching strategies for staff in our weekly professional development sessions, the staff have now completed an overview of every phase of our required lesson structure. Staff and students should be so proud of how they have managed the changing environment of the classroom to use the best, evidence-informed routines and practices. Every day we see our students focusing on crucial extended silent practice, and also on engaging, challenging and carefully planned questions to improve their articulation and confidence. This ensures we get 100% of students thinking hard 100% of the time, helping them climb their own personal mountains to the best universities, careers and apprenticeships of their choosing. I look forward to sharing details of the structure and routines in future newsletters. We will, of course, continue to refine our approaches and improve classroom practice; however, the disruption-free classroom environment in the school is clearly evident, and I encourage you to book a School in Action tour on our website to see our fantastic staff and students at work.

Wishing you a fantastic half term.

Mr R Gerrard

Headteacher

**Pizza and Quiz night (AKO)**

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## Safeguarding Update

At Oakbank School, the safety and wellbeing of our students remains our highest priority. We are committed to creating a secure, supportive and respectful environment where every child feels safe, valued and able to thrive.

This term, students have taken part in assemblies and Key stage 3 PSHE lessons focusing on important safeguarding themes including online safety, respectful relationships, mental wellbeing and healthy decision-making. We encourage all students to speak to a trusted adult if they ever have concerns about themselves or others.



As we approach the summer months, we would also like to remind families about the importance of safe online activity outside school hours. Please continue to monitor social media use, gaming platforms and messaging apps, and have regular conversations with your child about staying safe online and reporting anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

We are grateful for the continued support of parents and carers in helping us maintain a strong safeguarding culture across our school community. If you ever have any safeguarding concerns or need advice, please do not hesitate to contact the school and ask to speak with a member of the safeguarding team. You can also now report Safeguarding concerns online through the “I want to talk” button on the school website. This is available for both parents and students and will be monitored regularly. Please note that this feature is not for emergency purposes and emergencies should be reported to the police.

Finally, we have launched our new Identity Club at Oakbank - a safe space for those that identify as or consider themselves an ally of those that are LGBTQ+. This takes place every Thursday at lunchtime in G1.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in keeping our students safe.

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## Anxiety workshop for parents (of Secondary school aged children)

[Please click here to register](#)

This online parent workshop with the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) from NHS Berkshire is designed to help you:

- Understand what anxiety is and how it can show up in children and young people's thoughts, feelings, bodies and behaviour
- Learn about the key factors that maintain anxiety
- Explore practical ways parents and carers can provide support
- Understand when and how to seek further support if your child or young person is struggling

## Attendance Update

Thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support with student attendance. Since the first week of May, attendance at Oakbank School has risen by 4%, which is a fantastic improvement and reflects the positive partnership between home and school.

Excellent attendance is strongly linked to excellent outcomes, future opportunities and lives full of choice. Every day in school matters, and we are committed to working together with families to ensure every student attends regularly and feels supported to do so.

To strengthen our approach further, we have recently introduced a new graduated attendance strategy, allowing us to identify concerns earlier and provide the right level of support for students and families. Our attendance team continues to make daily calls to absent students in order to offer support, check on wellbeing and help identify any barriers to attendance as quickly as possible.

We are also pleased to see students engaging positively with our new attendance rewards initiative. Every Wednesday, students can exchange their 100% weekly attendance streaks in our "Swap Shop" to purchase Oakbank-branded merchandise — a fun way to celebrate excellent attendance and commitment to school.

We would also like to remind families of the following key expectations:

Please report all absences daily through MCAS before 8:30am.

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Wherever possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours unless it is an emergency appointment.

Students should attend school with minor illnesses wherever possible, as many symptoms can be managed safely during the school day.

Please avoid keeping students at home due to friendship, pastoral or lesson-related worries. Time away from school often makes these difficulties harder to resolve. Instead, contact us directly — we are here to help and will always work with families to put support in place.

If your family is experiencing difficulties affecting attendance, please reach out to us. We want to help, and by working together we can ensure every student has the best possible chance to succeed.

**Date for the Diary** - we will be hosting an Attendance Information Evening for all Oakbank Parents on Wednesday 1st July in person at 4.30pm. The purpose of this evening is to communicate the importance of and the data behind excellent school attendance, demonstrate use of MCAS to report and to explain our systems and graduated approach that we use to support families improve attendance.

#### **Leavers Hoodies available on MCAS until 1st June**

The deadline for purchasing a Leavers Hoodie for Year 11 is 1st June and they are available via the MCAS app. The Leavers Hoodie features all the names of Year 11 students from this year. They will be given to students on Leavers Day on 15th June.

#### **Prom Tickets available on MCAS until 2nd June**

Available on the MCAS app until 2nd June. We have to confirm our numbers to the venue then so will not be able to extend the deadline any further. Congratulations to **Racheal Okoro** who had the highest number of prom points and so wins a free ticket! Those who have the top 5% and 10% of points and therefore will qualify for a discount will be announced after the deadline and can contact the school to receive their reimbursement for the value of the discount. We will announce the winners of the 3 x £50 vouchers, who will be drawn from the top 50% of prom point earners, at Leavers Assembly on 15th June.

Prom planning is well underway by our staff team, including designing how the photo print out will look, choosing items for the make your own pick n mix stand, creating some key decorations, and considering what the best dessert options will be. It will certainly be a night to remember, and we would be delighted if all students who have earned their invite are there on 17th June.

#### **Year 11 Leavers Day**

On 15th June, our Year 11s will sit their final exam. Afterwards, we will give students time to change into their leavers shirts, and donate their blazers, ties, calculators, and skirts if they wish; in exchange for an ice cream token! Once this is done (and after any

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student who has extra time has finished) we will have a Leavers Assembly, where we share goodbye and good luck messages, see a slideshow of pictures from the past and happy memories, and celebrate the journey that our students have been on.

After the Leavers Assembly, our students will gather in the lower playground for shirt signing and an ice cream van. Students will be available for collection from 12pm and all Year 11s should be offsite by 12:30pm.

### **SEN Teaching Assistant Opportunity**

We are delighted to announce that we will be expanding our teaching assistant team. This will be a brilliant opportunity for a motivated individual to join our growing SEND department, and the fantastic staff community at Oakbank. This addition to the team also reflects the feedback from the recent parent survey which asked for more SEN support in lessons; as a school, we continue to look to act on the feedback we receive. More information about the role, and information about how to apply, is available on our website now.

### **GCSE Exams Update**

Our Year 11s have been fantastic in the first two weeks of their GCSE exams. Subjects such as English Literature and Religious Studies have already concluded, while others like DT, Statistics and Hospitality & Catering are still to have an exam. Our teachers have been delivering boosters the day before each exam, and warm ups the morning of, to ensure that all our students are as prepared as possible to walk into the exam hall. We would like to thank again the Shinfield Community Church and SHARE who have supported our breakfasts for students so everyone can access toast, cereal, fruit, juice or a breakfast bar before they start their day.

We would encourage all Year 11s to continue to revise over the half term, and come in for Half Term School if they can. This term we have fantastic additional provision for Maths coming in from other local schools to support our Year 11 students. It might seem like a big ask to work during the holidays, but the hours they put in over this week can make all the difference, and they will be school and exam free from the 15th June!

### **Year 10 Mocks, Access Arrangements & Dyslexia Screening**

Year 10s will begin their mocks on 16th June, which will serve as a taster of what is to come for them in a year's time, and provide a good picture of their current knowledge and understanding. These mocks will be run seriously, and students who disrupt the exams or break the rules will be disqualified.

Year 10s continue to be assessed for access arrangements; teachers have been completing staff feedback which is necessary evidence for the new JCQ process that we must follow. During the mock exams, we will continue to collect evidence.

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During the Year 10 mocks period (16th - 26th June), we will also be running a dyslexia screening for students in all year groups. Students who have been identified by staff as showing indicators of dyslexia will be invited to this screening. This screening will indicate whether a child requires further testing.

## PLA / NSH - Fun Friday Highlights: Community, Competition, Cakes from Pit Stop / Basketball Reading rockets

Thank you to Shinfield Parish Council for their very kind grant of £4,900 which we will use to purchase some very much needed table tennis equipment for the students to use at break and lunch; the school is also contributing and will continue to do so. We are really looking forward to getting these up and running at the earliest opportunity.



## Enrichment Clubs

### History Club

It has been a truly brilliant term for our Year 10 GCSE History Club. The dedication shown by our historians has been nothing short of exemplary, and the progress being made each week is a testament to their hard work. Mrs. Shaughnessy has been incredibly impressed by the keen efforts of the students who attend every single week. Whether it's staying back after a long school day or diving into complex topics, the commitment to getting that "extra bit of support" is clearly paying off. With Year 10 Summer Mocks fast approaching, our sessions have been laser-focused on ensuring every student feels prepared and empowered. Our sessions focus on:

- Content Deep-Dives: Re-visiting core topics to ensure no knowledge gaps remain.

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- The "Top Mark" Strategy: Breaking down exam questions to understand exactly what examiners are looking for.
- Skill Mastery: Equipping students with the analytical tools they need to succeed both in their daily lessons and under exam conditions.

By revisiting challenging material in a supportive environment, students are gaining the self-assurance needed to tackle even the trickiest sources and essays. Whether it's for the short-term win of a great mock result or the long-term goal of GCSE success, these students are setting themselves up for a fantastic future. Well done to everyone involved!

### **Electronics Club**

Electronics Enrichments is something that has been implemented this year and a small number of year 9's have taken on the challenge of creating different electronic products from scratch. They have excelled using soldering irons to solder complex parallel circuits. So far they have created a Vibro-Bug, a Hand Held Fan and a Dark Light #Box. Every circuit they manufacture increases in difficulty and skill and these students have taken on the challenge head on with great success.

### **Journalism**

It has been an incredibly busy and creative term for Oakbank's Journalism Club! Our dedicated team of young reporters, editors, and designers have been working tirelessly behind the scenes, and we are thrilled to share what we've been up to. For the past few weeks, the club has been channeling their inner journalists to launch our maiden student mini-zine, Evergreen. Named to reflect fresh ideas and growth, Evergreen is entirely student-led. The team has taken full ownership of the project, diving into every aspect of modern publishing. Our club members have been:

- Brainstorming topical articles, school news, and opinion pieces that matter to the Oakbank community.
- Crafting everything from book reviews to exclusive interviews.
- Learning the basics of graphic design and editing to bring the pages to life.

The final touches are being put on the maiden issue of Evergreen, and we cannot wait to share it with the rest of the school very soon. Keep your eyes peeled!

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### **Keyboard Club**

Since keyboard club launched a couple of weeks ago, we have seen many students enjoying playing a wide range of pieces. Students' have been strengthening and transferring their practical skills from lessons, through practising new pieces of music of their choice in keyboard club. After half term, the keyboard club will continue and we hope to see some more performances from students of the pieces they have been working hard to learn and are proud to share with one another.

### **D&D Club**

The group have adventured far and wide across the realm of ' Domnovia' this term, they have planned a heist as part of their mission in the North at the village of Zennor to help Joane Garrey, aka 'the blue canary', to uncover the 'scoop of the century'. This they completed, bravely defeating ..... and freeing water demons.

We have also been doing some Games Master training, giving our members the opportunity to design their own adventure and take a turn sitting the other side of the screen getting to make the decisions.

### **Warhammer Club**

In Warhammer club this week the students have been putting into practice the skills we learned on our visit to the Warhammer store last term. It's even more satisfying playing with our own models we have built and painted using the set donated by ex-pupils of the school. The question is, will the Space Marines triumph or will the Necrons seize the day? We have also been enjoying the Warhammer magazines that were kindly donate by Mr Ellis for the club, the students have also been fortunate to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge Mr Ellis has about Warhammer thanks to it being moved to a Wednesday with Mr Ellise presiding.

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### **Crochet Club**

With the pattern chosen by crochet club members we have been creating an Among-Us character this term and realising the difference the size of wool makes!

### **Book Club**

In Book Club we have been focused on the Carnegie Awards and choosing our favourites from the shortlist (all of which are available on SORA so everyone has the opportunity to read. We are incredibly excited to have been invited to the Carnegie Awards in London in June.

Current thoughts on the novels are:

**Ghostlines:** scenic descriptions underpinning an adventure that twists and turns.

**Birdie:** friendships, discrimination and unexpected relationships. The perfect book for students who feel like they don't quite fit in.

**Wolf Siren:** A brilliant book focusing on women and girls with a twist on Red Riding Hood.

**24 seconds:** Amazing! A thought provoking, heart felt love story about the trials of being a 17 year old boy and the pressures upon you.

**Not Going to Plan:** Teenage Complications, peer pressure, fast read, verse novel. Consent, empowerment, true friendship.

**The Boy I Love:** Sad but full of love - two soldiers in WW1. very moving.



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### **Basketball Club**

Throughout this half term, students from Year 8 through to Year 11 have enjoyed participating in basketball sessions run by Reading Rockets. They have joined us on Monday and Wednesday lunchtimes for mini matches, shooting practice, and other basketball activities!



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## STEM CLUB: A Term of Discovery with the Eurekans!

With our surroundings bursting into a lush, vibrant green this term, the Eurekans have been enthusiastically engrossed in the wonders of **photosynthesis** and plant biology. It has been a term of muddy hands, brilliant minds, and an incredible boost to our scientific capital! Here is a look back at how our young scientists grew their knowledge from the ground up.

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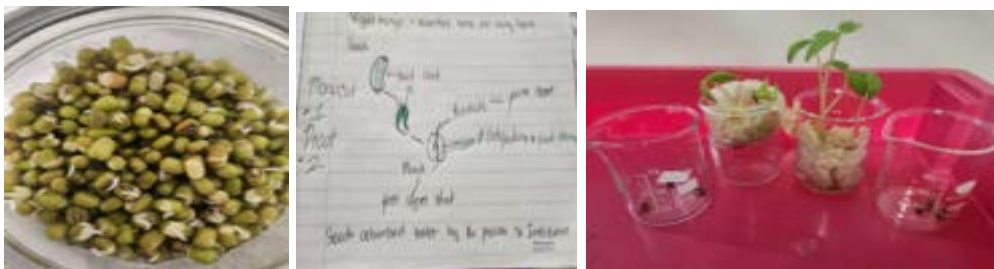


### From Seed to Sprout: The Magic of Germination

We kicked things off with a crucial KS2 recap, diving straight into the mechanics of how life begins. The Eurekaans didn't just read about growth—they engineered it! By growing *Vigna mungo* seeds, students investigated the exact environmental factors required to trigger germination. Our science capital skyrocketed as we unlocked the linguistic secrets behind the science. The Eurekaans mastered the etymology of tricky vocabulary, confidently breaking down the definitions of **monocotyledons and dicotyledons**.

### The Deep Dive: Surface Science & Transport

Things got beautifully complex as the Eurekaans moved past basic growth and into the molecular world. They successfully untangled some of the most commonly confused processes in physical science, mastering the differences between **Absorption and Adsorption**. **Imbibition**: Discovering the powerful process of imbibition where dry seeds soak up water and swell up right before germination.



### When STEM Meets Art: The Ultimate Collaboration

In the final week the **STEM Club** joined forces with the **ART Club** for an extraordinary cross-curricular pottery session. The Eurekaans rolled up their sleeves to design and craft their own **custom clay planters**. This wasn't just arts and crafts—it was a direct application of their surface science lessons! As they molded the clay, students discussed how the porosity allows for natural **imbibition and air circulation**, creating the ultimate breathable environment for their newly sprouted *Vigna mungo* plants. From linguistic roots to clay boots, it has been a phenomenal term of deep learning, creativity, and scientific triumph. Eurekaans are officially growing the future!

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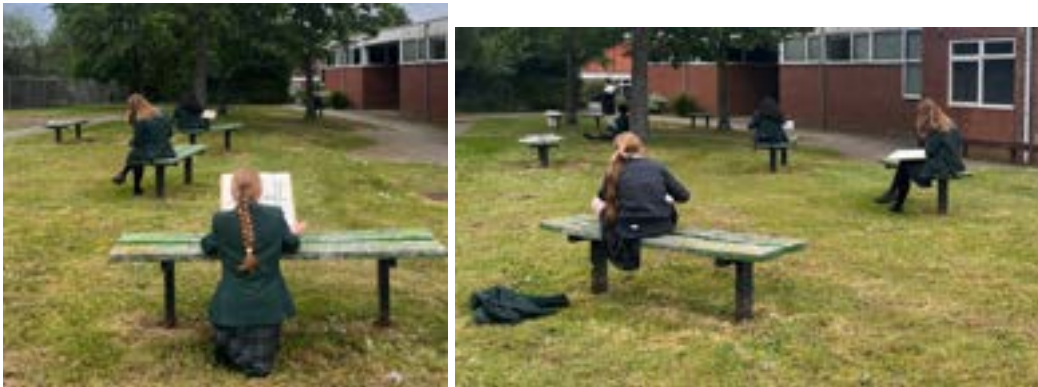
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## Art Club

This term, Art Club students explored the fundamentals of observational drawing, building both confidence and technical skill through diverse drawing activities. We explored various drawing styles, experimented with line, tone, texture, and composition to understand how artists interpret the world. Through structured still-life studies, students practiced capturing shape, proportion, and detail while using shading techniques to create depth and form. Their growing patience and focus were evident as they refined their skills to produce more accurate depiction of what they saw.

The main highlight was an outdoor live drawing session, where students sketched roughly what they saw outside. Observing trees, pathways, and buildings, they learned to translate complex environments onto paper while exploring perspective and proportion. Throughout the term, the students demonstrated remarkable creativity, resilience, and a willingness to experiment. It has been a pleasure watching their artistic confidence and observational talents flourish.



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### Fun Friday

Fun Friday activities have successfully brought together students from all years and staff, fostering a great sense of community. Recent activities have included a Spelling Bee, Duck Duck Goose, and Bottle Flipping, all of which saw enthusiastic participation from across the school.

We anticipate with pleasure the array of engaging activities planned for the forthcoming Fun Friday.

### Merits

Our Highest merit earners per year group this term

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Year Group	Name	Total
7	Jack A	399
8	Noah N	529
9	Olivia C	505
10	Gigi K	290
11	Katie R	441

Our highest merit earners across the school this term

Year Group	Name	Total
8	Noah N	529
9	Olivia C	505
8	Theo N	481
9	Ayessa A	451
9	Laila H	446

### **Making every second count**

One of the best times to walk around the school to see a true reflection of everyone's hard work is during Period 5 on the final day of term. Consistently, here at Oakbank School, we are incredibly proud of our staff and students who make every second count. Even with the excitement of the upcoming week off, today's final lesson was tackled with the exact same focus and

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determination as any other day, right up until the final bell. Please see below for a selection of photographs taken during Period 5 today.

Arcweb.org.uk  
ARC

# Weekly Youth Group

## CHILL OUT

Fridays after School  
£1pp - bring a friend!  
Wokingham Youth Centre  
35 Reading Rd, Wokingham RG41 1EG  
4pm - 5.30pm

Snacks, Board Games, Community and More...

WE'RE PROUD OF YOU!

For information email [youthaccess@arcweb.org.uk](mailto:youthaccess@arcweb.org.uk) or call 07305076576

Since St Car Park  
BSB RG41X5  
Term 5/16/17

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We have a busy summer term 6 ahead at Oakbank, including:

- **GCSE Exams**
- **Year 10 Mocks, 16th-26th June**
- **Year 11 Leavers Assembly, 15th June.**
- **Year 11 Prom, 17th June**
- **Year 6 transition 24th June**
- **Attendance Workshop Evening - Wednesday 1st July**
- **Academic Review Evening for Years 7-9, 14th July**
- **Academic Review Evening for Year 10, 16th July**

Wishing you all a wonderful and restful half term,

Mr R Gerrard  
Headteacher

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