

Friday Focus

Friday 11th September 2025



Dartmoor
Multi Academy
Trust

...everyone in our Trust.



We have written to you about attendance a lot since the beginning of the school term. We want your children in lessons learning from subject experts. The students have stepped up to the mark and attendance has really improved. Thank you to everyone for supporting us with our drive. School attendance is currently sitting over 94%. Tutor groups with the best improved attendance receive a reward of a "skip the lunch queue" however with the good attendance so far this term it has caused some issues - good issues! Mr Corkell spoke to me the other day saying that we had a problem as there were 8 tutor groups where no student had taken a day off ill this term and we did not have enough passes. This is a great problem to have!

From talking to students recently, I was pleased to hear they feel that it has been a very friendly and positive start to the school year. And when I looked at the behaviour data this morning I could see that it had improved significantly since last year. I am so proud of our students and all of their hard work. Together, with the dedication of every member of staff we are making it a great place to be.

Thank you for your patience with our new catering systems. I apologise that the change of till companies has not been smoother. Again, the students have been very understanding about this and have been very patient when the tills have taken a bit longer to go through. Normal service should be returned soon.

It was great to speak to so many of you at our consultation on Curriculum Enrichment Week on Tuesday. We are not looking at losing the week, but we do want to improve it and make it even more inclusive. Your feedback was very welcome.

On Wednesday we are hosting an event in conjunction with the Okehampton BID showing businesses about SEEDL (A free online learning platform) and how it can be used to support staff training and Development. Next week I also look forward to seeing you at our Meet the Tutor Evening on Thursday 18th September, and don't forget our annual sponsored walk on Friday 19th September. Please make sure that you have given consent for your child to take part.

Important Reminder: Jewellery and Nose Piercing Policy :

We would like to remind you that, in line with our school policy, any nose piercing must be a small stud only, nose rings are not permitted. Earrings should be one pair of studs, no hoops.

Please ensure this is sorted by Monday, as students wearing nose rings will be asked to remove them or will be offered a stud from staff. Thank you for your support in maintaining our uniform and appearance standards.

Principal's breakfast – Students of the week:

- **Ash:** Skyla Kirby - 10A/LEW has had a fantastic start to the new school year, showing positive engagement that promises continued achievement throughout this term.
- **Beech:** Lucia Floyd walker 11B/JAE for having some flash fiction published following a writing competition
- **Oak:** Rowan Grainge for having some flash fiction published following a writing competition
- **Elm:** Marnie Harris – embracing challenges in her start as a Year 7 at Okehampton College

Well done. We are so proud of you all!

Enrichment Programme: This week students in Years 7-13 have visited sign-up fairs to join break and after school clubs that will begin on Monday 15th September. [Click this link for the proposed clubs we can offer.](#)

I am sure you will agree we have a fantastic offer for students to develop their interests and embrace new challenges. We encourage all students to sign up for at least one club a week. Late buses run on a Tuesday and Thursday for any after-school activities.



New Attendance Support Minibus Service:

Okehampton College is launching a new Attendance Support Minibus to help families overcome challenges that may be preventing their child from attending Okehampton College regularly. This FREE service is aimed at students whose attendance is falling due to unauthorised absences and which can be linked to a range of barriers including:

- Mental health and wellbeing concerns
- Temporary transport difficulties
- Family or caring responsibilities
- Anxiety or school-related stress
- Social or emotional challenges

Driven by our Social Inclusion Officer, Mr Strawbridge, the minibus will operate daily from 9am to 10am, arriving at targeted students' home addresses to work directly with families. The goal is to provide a supportive, personalised service that helps young people re-engage with college life, in line with the attendance policy and as part of a strategy deployed to improve attendance alongside attendance support plans. If you would like to find out more, please contact Mr Ross Corkell (Attendance Lead) at rcorkell@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk.



Competition Winners

Last term, English Teacher, Mrs Edwards ran a writing competition entitled Grim's Tales, flash fiction, alongside the national organisation [YoungWriters](https://www.youngwriters.org/). Two of the entries received were then submitted on behalf of the school.

Amazingly BOTH of our entries have been shortlisted and will be published in an anthology, which also means they will be immortalised in print given that all published work is stored in the British Library!

Congratulations to our two fantastic authors, Lucia Floyd-Walker (Year 11) and Rowan Grainge (Year 10).

The Three Wish Mirror

I wish to see my beloved.

The mirror showed her beloved walking home from war. His clothes were muddy and tattered, but she wept with joy at the sight of him.

I wish he had a new coat.

That evening, she waited for her beloved to return. Instead, his mother knocked on the door with terrible news. He was to hang on the morrow for stealing the prince's new coat.

I wish to be with him again.

The soldiers came at dawn, and she hung beside her beloved. After all, that was the price for witchcraft.

Lucia Floyd-Walker (14)

Okehampton College, Okehampton

Fairy Tale Mash Up

Wolf Beast was in bed, expecting Red Riding Hood. Seven dwarves appeared and gave the wolf an apple. He fell asleep in a glass coffin.

Belle and her father were passing. Belle's heart ached for the beast. She kissed him and he transformed into a prince. They married and had a daughter, Rapunzel, with magical hair.

A vain woman with two ugly daughters stole her. A princess wanted a wife. Rapunzel's fairy godfather arrived; Rapunzel went to the ball. She stole the princess' heart. The princess searched with the glass slipper. Rapunzel let down her hair. They had a son made out of wood: Pinocchio.

Rowan Grainge

Okehampton College, Okehampton



Friday Focus

Your School Nurse...

Most of you are probably wondering what a School Nurse actually is and what do they do? So, I thought I would write a little bio to help you understand a little more about me and how I could help you.

Who am I?

I am an Adult Trained Registered Nurse and initially studied at the University of the West of England in Bristol way back in 2006. I have always loved working in the community, supporting people in their own homes take control of their health. I started working for the Public Health Nursing Team in 2024, where I completed my specialist training to work as a School Nurse, to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people. You may have heard of us referred to as School Nurses or Public Health Nurses, but they both mean the same thing!

What do I do?

The main focus of my role is working with you to support you with any worries or concerns you may have. We do this by working with you, listening to you, highlighting your strengths and making a plan together to promote the change you are seeking. We offer direct support through health promotion advice and interventions, as well as signposting or referring to more suitable or specialist health services, to ensure you receive the most appropriate support.

Fun facts about me!

I am obsessed with cooking programmes!!

I am an early riser and love going for walks on the beach or on the moors!!

I am a queen of DIY and love building furniture!!

I love spending time with family and friends making the most of any good weather we get!!

Confidential conversations

I will not pass on anything you say to anyone else, without your permission, unless you or someone else is at risk of harm. If I did need to share anything you have told me, I would always try to discuss this with you first.

How do we support you?

You can talk to us about any health concerns but the things that young people often want to talk to us about include:

- Sexual health and relationships (including gender and identity)
- Smoking, alcohol and/or drugs
- Feelings and emotions
- Healthy eating, exercise and/or growth (including weight)
- Medical condition or worry about health
- Going to the toilet/having toileting accidents (Bladder & Bowel)
- Sleep
- Moving school, changes at school, or not attending school
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Feeling safe/unsafe around family or friends.

School nurse clinic

I hold a clinic Twice a month on a Friday!

To make a referral, search Devon Country council, school nurse referral online.

More info: Contact us, speak to any staff member or take a look at our website healthforteens.co.uk

How can you access support?

If there is anything health related you would like to talk to us about, there are a few different ways you can do this:

HEALTH:TEENS

Take a look at our website where you'll find information about how to contact us and the self-referral form:

healthforteens.co.uk



This can be anonymous or you can use it as a way of communicating with me or arranging an appointment! Text us via **Chat Health on 07520 631722**

Talk to a trusted adult – if you are happy to share your concerns with them, they can contact our Hub or make a referral to our team.



USEFUL LINKS

Term Dates



Letters Home



Enrichment Programme



Okehampton College



KEY DATES

- **Thursday 18th September 2025** - Meet the Tutor for All Year Groups
- **Friday 19th September 2025** - Sponsored Walk
- **Wednesday 24 September 2025** - Year 5 & 6 Open Evening
- **Thursday 16th October 2025** - Post-16 Open evening
- **Friday 24th October 2025** - Non Pupil Day
- **Monday 27th October - Friday 31st October 2025** - Autumn Half Term
- **Monday 3rd November 2025** - All Students return
- **Friday 19th December 2025** - Last day of term
- **Monday 5th January 2026** - Non Pupil Day
- **Tuesday 6th January 2026** - All students return

Please do get in touch if you have any questions.

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