

Friday Focus

Friday 3rd October 2025



Dartmoor
Multi Academy
Trust
...everyone in our Trust.



Teachers work very hard to develop their practice to help make the learning experience for students even better. We are using coaching to work collaboratively with our colleagues to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers reflect and

then plan their teaching episodes to maximise student outcomes. Students cannot afford to miss any part of their lessons. We are having a push on students getting to lessons promptly so that learning time is maximised. If students are in the corridors during lesson times they can expect to be escorted to their lessons or encouraged to get there. There are opportunities for young people to get support at social times when the house hubs are open, or by asking their teacher to request a welfare call.

It is our experience that a surprising amount of learning time can be lost by a student using the toilet during a lesson and we do not want this to happen. Whilst I appreciate that on occasions students need to use the toilet during lessons, be it for medical reasons or otherwise, I am asking that students try to avoid using the toilets during lessons unless absolutely necessary. Toilets are open at break times and monitored to ensure students from other year groups do not use the wrong ones.

There appears to be a lot of coughs and colds around at the moment. It is certainly going through my house. On most occasions it is fine to send your child to school if they have a cold and if they feel well enough to attend. To help reduce the spread of illness, please remind children about the importance of regular handwashing. You can find more information and guidance in this regard on the NHS Website [by clicking here](#). We do not want students to miss more than a week (5 days) of school across the academic year. Nevertheless, I appreciate how hard students with chronic illnesses work to get in to school as often as they do, and we will continue to support them. There are some truly remarkable students doing amazing things to get here.

We have been working in the background on building a new website. It is very close to completion and will be launched soon. One big difference is that this new one will have the school curriculum clearly laid out for parents to see and will contain links on how to catch up on any missed learning.

We are pleased to invite you to our upcoming Post-16 Open Evening, taking place on Thursday 16th October from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. This event offers a valuable opportunity for students and families to explore the wide range of pathways available after Year 11 and to

speak directly with subject leaders and current Sixth Form students. As part of the evening, we are also offering two additional talks specifically designed to support Year 11 students ahead of their forthcoming mock examinations.

Each session will be delivered jointly by our Head of English and Head of Maths, who will share effective revision strategies, exam techniques, and practical advice to help students prepare with confidence in both subjects.

Additional Talk Details:

Times: First session: 5:00pm – 5:30pm

Second session: 6:00pm – 6:30pm

Location: The Octagon

Focus: How to revise effectively for English and Maths, and how parents can support at home

To help us manage numbers, please sign up for one of the talk sessions by clicking [here](#).

We strongly encourage all parents of Year 11 students to attend one of these sessions, as they will provide valuable insights into how best to support your child during this crucial stage of their education.

This week's attendees at the Principal's Breakfast were:

Ash: Makayla Eddowes, who has made a huge effort this term! She is polite and regularly demonstrates the Oke Way qualities of kindness and resilience.

Beech: Izzy Mooney – For being an excellent role model on the sponsored walk, reminding younger students of the behaviour expectations.

Well done to both!

Devon Rugby Selection!



Congratulations to students Nell Alford, Lauren Cann and Poppy Pengelly who have been selected for the Under 16 Devon Rugby team.

Supporting Our Community:

Food Bank Donations and Volunteering

Our school is proud to be supporting both Okehampton Community Food Bank and Okehampton Food Bank through a food donation initiative this term. We are encouraging students, staff, and families to contribute non-perishable food items to help support vulnerable individuals and families in our local area. Please bring any donations to the house hub in the morning - big or small – it all makes a meaningful difference. (Please see the list of suggested items below).

In addition to collecting donations, we've been invited by Okehampton Community Food Bank to take part in a hands-on volunteering opportunity. Selected students will visit the food bank to help prepare £2.50 food boxes, gaining insight into the vital work the organisation does to support those in need. This experience will not only be educational but also deeply rewarding for those involved.

This initiative is being led by our Beliefs and Values (BV) Ambassadors in collaboration with students from our Christian Union Club, who are passionate about making a positive impact in our community.

We are incredibly proud of our students for stepping up and showing such compassion and leadership. Thank you to everyone who is supporting this effort - together we care, we challenge, we thrive!



Registered by the Charity Commission of England and Wales number 1214881

Autumn/Winter Food Bank Needs

- Longlife milk
- Jam/marmalade/marmite/peanut butter
- Jars of sauces / casserole mix sachets
- Cans of pulses/veg
- Jelly sachets/custard/rice pudding/fruit
- Cans of tuna fish or meals
- Butcher's vouchers/Lidl gift cards/ Beanfeast vouchers
- Bread or cake mixes
- Treats; biscuits/cakes/crisps/cereals

We have currently plenty of pasta, baked beans and cereals.
THANK YOU

Okehampton Community Food Bank
sort code 40 20 30
account 13840360

telephone 01837 218228
okehamptoncommunityfoodbank@gmail.com
3 East Street, Okehampton, EX20 1AS

Year 11 Catering & Hospitality



Over the past week, our Year 11 Catering and Hospitality students completed a full mock practical exam - in just 3.5 hours, they prepped, cooked and presented two dishes, each crafted to meet a specific brief. It was a high-pressure, high-reward experience that gave them a real taste of what's to come in their final exam.

From sizzling pans to beautifully plated creations, their kitchens were alive with energy, creativity and determination. Every student rose to the occasion, showcasing not just their culinary skills but their passion and professionalism. We couldn't be prouder of their hard work and dedication.

SEND Clinics

If you would like a conversation with one of the SEND Team please book an appointment at one of our SEND Clinics. They take place every other Thursday. You can book an appointment, using the same procedure we use for parents' evenings. Please follow [this link to book an appointment. SchoolCloud - Okehampton College](#) or use the QR code.





Why Are Teachers Using Tablets in Class?

A Peek Into Our Coaching Programme by Dr Kelly

You may have noticed your child mentioning that teachers are coming into classrooms with tablets and recording parts of lessons. So what's going on?

At our school, we're proud to be using Steplab, a professional development platform that helps teachers improve their practice through coaching. This isn't about evaluating or targeting "weaker" teachers — in fact, all staff involved have volunteered because they are passionate about becoming even better educators for your children.

Here's how it works: teachers record short clips of their lessons, watch them back with a trained coach, and agree on a specific action step to improve. These steps fall into five key areas of effective teaching:

- Secure attention – Ensuring students are focused and ready to learn
- Optimise communication – Presenting ideas clearly and accessibly
- Drive thought – Encouraging deep thinking and challenge
- Gather and give feedback – Checking understanding and responding
- Ensure consolidation – Helping students embed their learning

In the last fortnight, teachers have been working on steps such as:

- Checking whole-class understanding
- Establishing routines
- Responding to negative behaviours
- Stretching and challenging high-attaining students
- Specifying success and planning for feedback

We also asked teachers how they're finding the experience so far. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive:

- Average rating for the coaching experience: 4.9 out of 5
- Usefulness for improving teaching: 4.8 out of 5

Here's what some of our teachers had to say:

"It's been really insightful. Sometimes we get stuck doing what works — this has helped me see how much more I can improve."

"Gaining tips from a teacher outside my subject has been invaluable. I've already used new ideas in my classroom."
"It's great to have thoughtful conversations about

teaching, not just lessons. It feels incredibly collaborative and supportive."

"The chance to reflect and think about my teaching more has been really valuable. It's also great to work with a colleague and not feel judged, but supported."

We're excited about the journey ahead and confident that this work will have a lasting impact on the quality of teaching and learning across our school.

If you have any questions or would like to know more, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Polite Reminder... Parking and Drop-Off Safety

To help keep all our students and road users safe, we kindly remind parents and carers to follow these important guidelines during morning drop-off and after-school pick-up:

- Please do not park in front of the school gates or on the junction.
- Avoid reversing up the school drive.
- Do not park near the pedestrian crossing.

These measures are in place to ensure clear visibility and safe access for everyone. Your cooperation plays a vital role in maintaining a safe and respectful environment around the school. Thank you for your continued support.

Year 7 Survey

We would like to hear from Year 7 parents and students about their experience with joining Okehampton College. Please use the QR codes below to complete a short survey. This will allow us to hear your voice and to make improvements where necessary. (There are different surveys for Parents and Students).

Parents

Post-Transition Parent
Questionnaire: Settling into
Secondary School



Students

Settling In – Secondary Pupil Voice
Survey





Post-16 Focus

Each week we will be showcasing some of our amazing Post-16 Alumni and what they have achieved since their time with us.

Come and learn more about our Post-16 on Thursday 16th October at our open evening. Click on the image to the right for more information.



You are invited to:

Okehampton College Post-16 Open Evening

Thursday 16th October 2025
4:00pm - 6:00 pm



Kaitlyn Jacob (2022 – 2024)

Subjects studied: History, English Literature and Product Design

After sixth form: Currently in my second year of studying history at the University of Warwick.

What I'm doing now: Whilst studying at Warwick I have been working as a Regional Ambassador with the Holocaust Educational Trust as well as volunteering as a TA in Okehampton College on breaks from Uni in the History department so you may recognise me!

How sixth form helped me: Okehampton 6th form was the perfect stepping stone I needed to get to where I am now. The smaller class sizes, more personalised teaching was exactly what I needed to build confidence in my own ability and provided me with the support to excel at the opportunities I am now presented with. Studying at Okehampton's 6th form also opened up an incredible opportunity to join a Lessons From Auschwitz project with the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Without the school making me aware of this project and coordinating the trip for me and one other student I would have missed opportunities such as attending parliament, speaking to Holocaust survivors and completing many talks to students. Something that this school has continued to support me in doing despite no longer being a student here.



2

Haydon Perrior, 2014-2016

Subjects studied: Photography, Geography, Communications and Culture

After sixth form: I went on to study Photojournalism and Documentary Photography at the University of the Arts London, one of the world's leading art schools.

What I'm doing now: I'm now a represented commercial photographer and director based in London. My work spans global campaigns for clients such as Adidas, Airbnb, McDonald's, and Virgin Atlantic, and my photographs have been published by outlets including National Geographic, Vogue, and The New York Times.

How sixth form helped me: The support I received at Oke Sixth Form shaped both my studies and, more importantly, my personal development. The pastoral care from Mrs Little in particular but all the staff was genuinely life-changing, and I wouldn't be where I am without it. The freedom to explore my interests, combined with close guidance of staff who genuinely cared, gave me lessons that proved more valuable than those I later found at University. Those foundations still underpin my career today.

Favourite memory: Having the encouragement and space to pursue photography seriously for the first time, supported by staff who cared about my growth both academically and personally.



Yes, he took that photo!

Friday Focus



PARENT POP-UP

**THURSDAY
9TH OCT
10-12**

THE OCKMENT CENTRE

Support with...

- Transition
- SEND Support
- Education
- Neurodiversity
- Peer Support
- And more!

**WE WILL BE JOINED BY
EXETER COLLEGE AND
DIAS!**

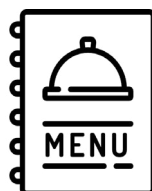
**EVERYONE
WELCOME**

**COME AND SEE US FOR
A CHAT!**

CALL 07933 663796 FOR MORE INFO

USEFUL LINKS

Term Dates



Letters Home



Enrichment Programme



Okehampton College



KEY DATES

- **Monday 6th - Tuesday 7th October 2025** - Flu vaccinations - all years
- **Thursday 16th October 2025** - Post-16 Open Evening & Year 11 Success 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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