

2 February 2024

OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE



Newsletter
Issue 3

Highlights

- SLT News
- Faculty Updates
- Skiing in Italy

At  We are

Kind

Tolerant

Respectful

Independent

Committed

Resilient

Hardworking

Responsible

Principal's Message; Andrew Sweeney



Welcome to the third edition of the College newsletter. It has been a busy half term with lots of opportunities both inside and outside school time for our students and we welcome this opportunity to share them with you.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our Enrichment Programme which has a wide variety of extra curricular activities on offer from all our faculty staff at varying times though the rotating timetable. It can be viewed on our website by [clicking here](#)

Congratulations to the Year 11s through the recent mock exam period. We look forward to working with students and parents of Year 10 next half term in preparation for their mock exams which take place in March. Don't forget there is lots of useful information on our website, including revision guides for each individual subject as well as the Preparation Evening on Wednesday 21st February 2024. Take a look by [clicking here](#).

Also, good luck to the Year 13s whose exams start on Monday 19th February 2024.

As always please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Email: admin@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk
Telephone: (01837) 650910

Important Dates

- Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2024 – Half Term.
- Monday 19th February to Friday 23rd February 2024 – Year 13 Practice Exams.
- Wednesday 21st February 2024 – Year 10 Exam Preparation Evening.
- Wednesday 28th February 2024 – Key Stage 4 Choices Evening.
- Wednesday 6th March 2024 – Year 8 Parent and Family Consultation Evening.
- Wednesday 13th March 2024 – Year 7 Parent and Family Consultation Evening.



... News from our Senior Leadership Team ...

B. Hachipuka, Assistant Principal

Student Voice

We are now completing the 3rd cycle of our Student Voice work. Students in tutor time discussed their views on Social Times, Communication, Student Leadership and Enrichment, which fed through to Year Student Councils and then through to the whole school Student Council.

1. Tutor Time discussions and recorded key points during Tutor time PSHE session.
2. AHOY meet with their Year Student Councils – discuss key points from Tutor Voice work.
3. Whole School Student Council met to finalise key points of discussion.
4. Present and discuss at SLT.
5. Feedback SLT actions to Tutor Groups and through Assemblies.
6. Publish actions to all stakeholders through posters and newsletters.

Students' voice is so important as part of school improvement and after half term we will be feeding back through tutor groups what the actions are in response to their views and suggestions.

Youth Cultural Champions

The YCCs have held their Friends' session which was a huge success! Each YCC invited a friend to the session which involved each YCC delivering their presentation, receiving questions about it, small group discussions and then ending the session with a shared lunch of all their wonderful food dishes that represent them and their culture and heritage. Everybody learnt so much about each other, whilst celebrating our diversity. YCCs next step is preparing for the evening where they invite their parents and families in. The second year with the Youth Cultural Champions really focuses on disseminating the programme into the rest of the school and community.

Student Testimonial:

"it as a great way to spread awareness about the discrimination students of a different heritage go through. Everyone enjoyed themselves....."

....we discussed what we liked about being from a different heritage, what we didnt like, what our friends could do to help, how it makes us feel....."

....We also discussed what friends can do to provide support for their friends how they can empathise for their cared ones...."

Year 9 Heroes

The Year 9 Heroes will start to mentor a Year 7

student once a week after half term. The mentor session will use a Leaders booklet that will take them through certain tasks and exercises that will help support the Y7 and develop their confidence and self esteem. It is a great opportunity for our older students to build relationships with younger ones and to develop their leadership skills. We look forward to this programme developing next term.

Year 7 Transition Leaders

Mr Parker and Mrs Hachipuka are spending the next week reading through all of the applications they have received from Year 7 students who wish to be a Transition Leader. Help will be called upon by the Year 8 Leaders who can support the process due to their experience last year. This is a great opportunity for the new Year 7 Leaders to be a part of the forthcoming Transition events to offer support to the Year 6 students. Watch this space for our new leaders!

Enrichment Week

Enrichment week planning is well underway and our Trip Leaders will be meeting after half term to ensure we are all working towards being well planned and ready for our exciting week of activities and trips in July! This truly is a week that both staff and students look forward to in order to embrace a week of experiencing something different, learning new skills and making new friends. If your child is yet to make their choice please contact jstevens@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk or lthompson@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk

Careers:

There have been lots of recent and exiting developments around careers work at the College. All year groups are being inducted in the use of Careerpilot- an online careers tool to support the students in realising their ambitions and what needs to happen in order for these dreams to become reality. As part of a range of new initiatives, pupils can also now access our Apprenticeships page via this Link. This page will guide pupils on how to apply for apprenticeships and what is available locally.

As part of Careers Week in March, we will be launching several aspects of our new careers provision including the College's first termly newsletter! Subject leaders within the college have been working hard to support more interactions with employers and the newsletter will act as both a gateway for student based opportunities and information for parents alike.

... News from our Senior Leadership Team ...



R. Corkell - Assistant Principal

Taking the proud and vital role of safeguarding puts me in the heart of the college community and enables the coordination of child protection so that all students can thrive. I fully believe in the six pillars of safeguarding our young people: Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership and Accountability. By adopting these six principles of safeguarding, the college can protect our young people.

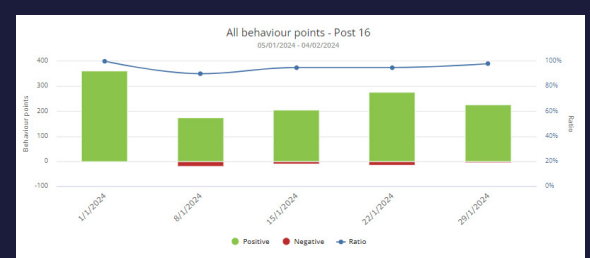
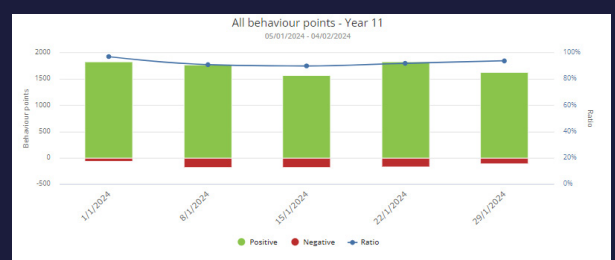
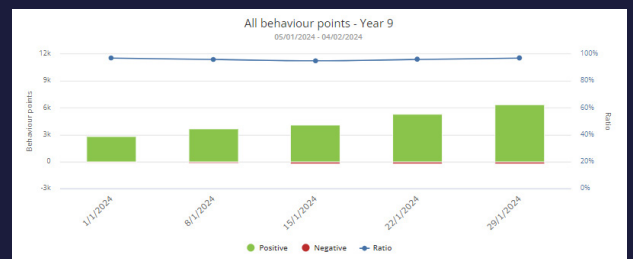
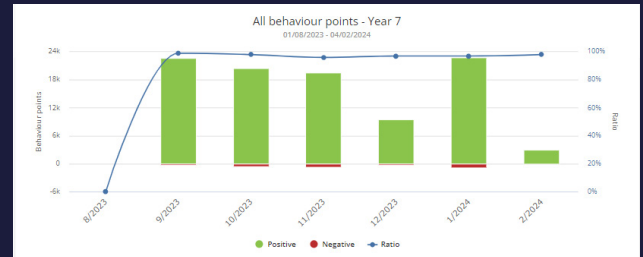
Through the importance of my role, my purpose is to foster these principles. Through Empowerment students are actively taught how to safeguard themselves as part of the personal development curriculum. Through Prevention staff are trained to respond effectively to the needs of students. Through Proportionality actions are taken in response to the safeguarding risk as these risks are identified. Through Protection maintaining a safe college site and environment to learn. Through Partnership maintaining regular communications with external agencies to support in college and the wider community. Through Accountability every member of staff knows their duty of care and records concerns, so action is taken.

All students continue to display the OKE 8 character habits through learning. With the achievement points earned, students are now exchanging these points for rewards in the shop which has had more items added in response to student voice such as sports equipment.

See here the breakdown of the monthly behaviour points with all achievement point shown by the green bars.

Learning through the OKE 8

Consequences	Learning habit	Rewards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsupportive of others' learning Not packing away equipment Use of negative terms when giving feedback to others 	Kind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving positive praise to others Showing gratitude to others helping you Modelling good behaviour and inspiring others to act accordingly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not correcting work from feedback Not embracing challenge Lacking the desire to improve 	Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking considered and appropriate risks with learning Reflect on misconceptions and challenges openly Embracing difficulty with 'can do' attitude
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacking effort in how classwork is presented Learning is passive and not attempting learning when asked Not engaging in the process of how to use information to improve outcomes 	Committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being inquisitive and show a proactive character through seeking out ways to extend learning Seeking challenges to stretch knowledge and understanding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student's not using own motivation to complete learning tasks Not engaging with extended learning opportunities and limiting the potential for progress. 	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking out feedback on your own Applying a growth mindset Tackling problems with positivity Seeking out independent opportunities to extend learning through after school clubs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unwilling to listen to others' viewpoint Unacceptance of differences Making negative comments to others 	Tolerant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respecting other cultures Contributing positively to activities. Modelling good behaviour and inspiring others to act accordingly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through regular reminders, not yet demonstrating a desire to meet basic expectations on classroom conduct Not actively listening to others Persistent talking off topic during studying 	Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to the teacher and each other, not talking over people Leading by example and having a positive impact both in and out of the classroom.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classwork in complete due to insufficient effort Homework is inconsistently produced and does not meet the teacher's expectations or fulfil the student's potential. 	Hardworking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing all tasks to the best of your ability Home learning is consistently produced on time and to the best of their ability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not having the correct equipment Not contributing to lessons or seeking out help. Acting out against expectations from teachers to keep you safe 	Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The love of learning is shown through the willingness to lead in class Learners are prepared for lessons, both in terms of equipment and attitude.



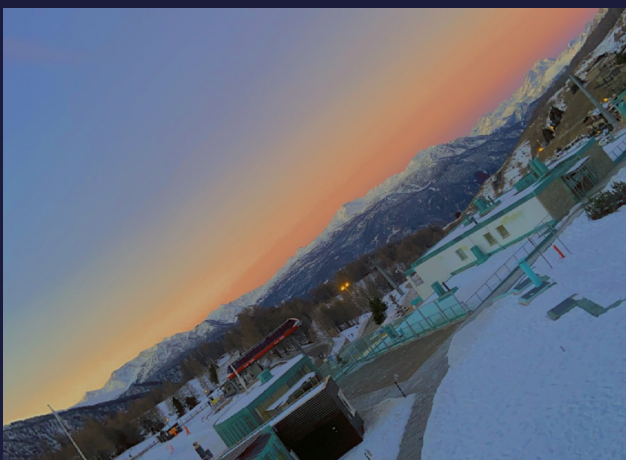
...Italy Ski Trip...

The College took over 80 students to Sestriere in Italy during the 2023 Christmas holidays. We were blessed with great snow and weather conditions. 6 days resulted in 30 hours of tuition and turned what were novice skiers and snowboards into confident individuals on the slopes. Après ski activities took the form of cultural experiences in the local village and included ice skating and shopping. Testimonies from students as well as more photos and videos can be seen on our Facebook page.

The college would like to build on the success of this trip by offering the same experience in future years.



Student Testimonial



As we were driving through Italy on our way to Sestriere, the views were stunning, with little villages and towns dotted in amongst the hundreds of mountains, much like the setting in childhood fairytales. Once we arrived we only saw more amazing sights while improving our skiing techniques and overall confidence and slowly making it up the mountains higher and higher, which only provided us with a more broad view of the breathtaking part of the country.

L. Walker. Year 11 Student



...Faculty Updates...



SEND Faculty

The SEND faculty are working hard to build relationships with our stakeholders and we would like to thank everyone involved on this journey- this includes our students, parents, staff, governors, PTFA, volunteers and multi-agency support, all of whom support us to continue to develop SEND provision at Okehampton College. Here is a snippet of our stakeholder work this term!.

Student Voice:

We were thrilled to receive Devon County Educational Psychologist Carrie Gould in January 2024 to deliver a voice work session around successful universal provision in the classroom. Our KS3 and KS4 students were fantastic ambassadors for the school and were able to talk about what helps them learn best in lessons. Their voice will be captured in a Devon County Report for 'Ordinarily Available'.

Upcoming student voice opportunity:

Devon County Youth Participation Service are being welcomed into Okehampton College in February and March to meet a group of students with autism. Our joint aim is to develop confidence and strengthen student voice so we can hear about their school experiences and strengthen good practice. These sessions will accumulate into feeding back to senior leaders in the school. If you would like your child to be part of this exciting opportunity, please contact send@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk, we would love to hear from you.

SEND Coffee Mornings:

Our SEND 'Talk About sessions' are held termly and we invite all parents/guardians with an interest in exploring more about the additional needs of their children to attend. We provide coffee and a biscuit/cake and invite questions, share experiences and events on key issues and offer a listening ear. (We also share a bit of information too).

The Autumn Term 2023 Coffee morning 'My child might have special needs' was popular. It was great to have such positive feedback which included:

- 'Just to say thank you again for a really helpful meeting this morning. I felt really heard...!'
- 'Thanks so so much for our meeting today, I feel a weight off my shoulders...'
- 'Its great getting to meet members of staff face to face as well as other parents/carers'

Upcoming Coffee Mornings with external speakers

- 29 February 2024
'Let's Talk about ... My child finds it difficult to attend school and has SEN' with Debbie Chalk, Education Wellbeing Advisor for Devon County Council and the SEND team.
- 6 June 2024

'Let's Talk about ... How to support Speech and Language difficulties at home and in school' with Melissa New from the Communication and Interaction Advisory Team

Please save the dates in your diary, a letter will be sent out shortly with information on how to book your place. As a team, we really look forward to these events and being able to welcome you into our school.

A Big Thank you!

A big thank you to our PTFA who have donated tools and equipment to develop our sensory offer to students of the college, What would we do without you?

Communication with the SEND team

We are working hard to develop more effective communication with parents around SEND through our SEND clinics, Coffee Mornings and Parents Evenings. Get in touch!

1. SEND Clinic:

We invite you to book in if you have a concern about your child whether they are on the SEND register or not! We can offer Individual Learning plan reviews at this time as well with the SEND year lead: Our SEND clinics have been a real success, Parents and our staff feedback tells how useful this and supports the sharing information, raising questions and reviewing information.

Our SEND clinics are fortnightly, on a Thursday. Please do book in with the appropriate Year SEND lead. Our SEND Clinics operate in the same way as parents evenings and we are pleased to be able to offer a Hybrid; we understand that work commitments can mean meeting in person can be tricky so we can offer online clinic times too. Please contact send@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk if you have any questions or require specific timings.

Our Year SEND Leads are:

- Niki Lloyd - Year 7 and 10
- Gemma Garnsworthy - Year 8
- Marc Kerswill Year 9 and 11

2. By email:

Please use send@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk to contact us by email. This will enable us to direct your query to the best placed person.

3. Signposting:

The Devon County Council Local Offer brings together information about education, health and care services, voluntary agencies and support groups.

[Devon's SEND Local Offer - help and support for children with SEND](#)

...Faculty Updates...

Key Stage 3 English

This half term, Years 7, 8 and 9 have been all about Shakespeare! Year 7 are learning about Shakespearean England and Jacobean theatre, with a close focus on Hamlet. They have been practising their own Shakespearean English and would be thrilled to give you an at-home demonstration, I'm sure! Year 8 are reading The Tempest, one of Shakespeare's final comedies. As part of this topic, we look at the history of colonisation and how it inspired the character of Caliban: for a Jacobean audience, a very comedic figure, but not quite the same for a modern audience! In Year 9, students are reading Romeo and Juliet and learning all about the conventions of Shakespearean tragedy. This is excellent preparation for their GCSE text, Macbeth. Since Year 9 have been enjoying Bill Bryson's Shakespeare in their Book Club lessons, they have a very thorough knowledge of Shakespeare's world now.

Sparx Reader!

We are very excited to be launching Sparx Reader across all our KS3 groups from half term onwards. Year 7 have been our trial year group, and have been working hard to develop their reading skills at home. Years 8 and 9 will also be set weekly reading tasks using Sparx Reader. We know from our conversations with students and parents that it can be hard to set aside time for reading, and there is often a notable 'drop-off' from primary school in reading for pleasure. We hope that Sparx Reader will help to re-focus students on independent reading and improve their comprehension and vocabulary skills. We will be running Sparx Reader Catch-up sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays for students unable to complete the home learning, or those who require some support. For more information, please visit: [Sparx Reader](#)

Year 10 English

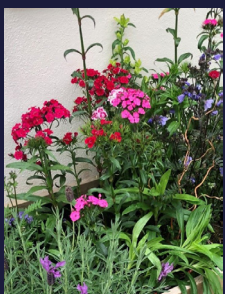
Since Christmas, Year 10 have been looking at the AQA 'Power and Conflict' collection of poetry. We have started by looking at the war poems which explore ideas of honour, duty, trauma and loss. Year 10 have approached these sensitive topics with maturity and insight, leading to some very interesting discussions in the classroom. In the coming weeks, Year 10 will be sitting their first set of mocks. These will be: English Language, Paper 1 and English Literature: An Inspector Calls and AQA 'Power and Conflict' poetry. For more support with revision, please see the revision pages on our website here: [Subject Revision Guides - OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE](#)

Year 11 English

Firstly, I would like to thank Year 11 for their exceptional focus in our 'Walkthrough Mock' on 19th January. This was in preparation for their English Language mock exam and we were all so impressed with their work ethic. We are nearing the end of our course as we finish looking at Macbeth and will then be focusing on revision and exam technique. To support students with their revision, please see the relevant pages on our website here: [Subject Revision Guides - OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE](#)

Sensory Garden

The SEND faculty have a small sensory garden which our students take pride in. Our young people plant seeds, water plants and take time to look after the space and investigate nature. As Spring is coming, we are on the lookout for donations. If you would like to support the young people who enjoy getting their hands dirty and making a small garden space into a big deal please consider gifting some plants, compost OR expert knowledge to help develop this vital space into a place that continues to support emotional wellbeing, critical thinking skills, physical fitness, creativity and communication and interaction skills.



Revision Sessions:

- Mondays – Room 618 – Year 10
- Tuesdays – Room 613 – Year 11 English Language
- Tuesdays – Room 609 – Year 11 'Power and Conflict' poetry
- Thursdays – Room 615 – Year 11 Literature, 6+
- Thursdays – Room 610 – Year 11 Literature, 4+



...Faculty Updates...

Drama Club Panto Performances

The Drama Department were delighted to be able to offer a weekly Drama Club for Years 7, 8 and 9 from September 2023. The wonderful Miss Turner decided to put on some mini-pantomimes, specifically 'Aladdin', 'Peter Pan', 'Snow White' and 'Cinderella'. The talented students got into groups, chose their script and rehearsed the plays every week. Every show needs behind-the-scenes back-up, so Ms Nielsen and Mrs Roberts organised training for the amazing backstage crew, who each took responsibility for planning and running the lighting, sound, costumes and props.

Student Review:

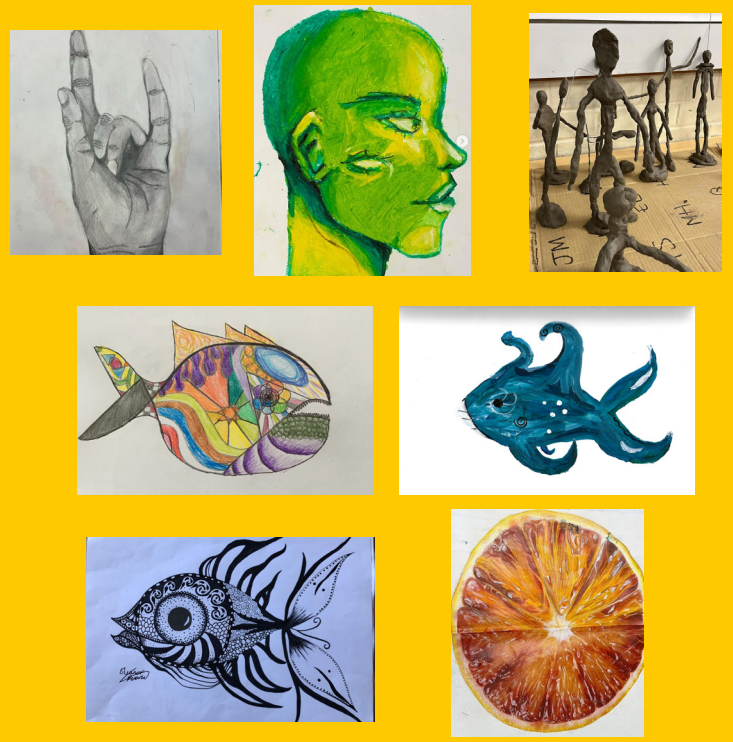
Imogen: In the spotlight of creativity, Okehampton College's KS3 Drama Club took audiences to a whole other place through fantastic performances. Our wonderful backstage crew took charge of the lighting, sound, costumes and props, showcasing their dedication, skill and independence.

Matilda: Let's give a quick mention to the actors and actresses; those guys gave a cracking performance! Let's just say weeks of hard work and preparation really paid off; it was absolutely remarkable! Every participant poured their heart into the productions, leaving an indelible mark of excellence.

Imogen: Bravo to the entire cast and crew for a truly amazing showcase of talent and teamwork! *Matilda:* Such fun!!!

Art-work

Here we have a selection of our work that we have been working on here in Okehampton College. We have explored many different disciplines including tonal observational drawings, abstract oil pastel portrait studies, 3-D clay work, mixed media observational drawings and intricate patterns in the style of Jason Scarpace. Keep an eye out on our Okehampton College Art Instagram page for more regular updates @okecollegeart




Photography

Photography students have been focusing on scale, proportion and story telling through their project "Microworlds".



...Faculty Updates...

Languages



People often ask us, 'Why learn Languages?', so here at Okehampton College, we spoke to our GCSE students who opted for French or German, and here are some of the reasons why!

Top 10 benefits of language learning:

1. Improved Memory Skills - learning languages, particularly at an early age improves neural connections and your ability to recall more information
2. Greater Understanding of Other Cultures - learning languages improves our ability to understand other cultures and to have an open-mind to different races and nationalities
3. Improved Listening Skills - learning languages improves our ability to understand questions, answers and discussion and therefore our ability to learn in general
4. Confidence to Learn More Languages Later On - learning languages lays the foundations to learn more languages in the future with greater speed and efficiency
5. Stronger Vocabulary - learning languages helps to expand both the breadth and depth of our vocabulary as we make connections between the shared roots and structures of the different languages we know
6. Helps Improve Social Skills - learning languages improves both listening skills and speech enriching our communication with other people
7. Easier To Understand Written Word - learning languages improves our ability to decipher and decode the written texts we encounter
8. Greater Confidence - learning languages at an early age builds a sense of autonomy and resilience to interact with words or concepts that you don't initially understand and to work things out for yourself
9. Allows us to travel - learning languages opens up opportunities to travel abroad and to use your language to gain an authentic insight into the people, places and cultures which you encounter
10. Greater employment opportunities - learning languages gives you a unique skill that makes you attractive to a wide range of employers who could benefit from your language skills.

We asked the French and German teachers at the College: 'Why did you choose to learn Languages?'. Here are their replies. Can you guess which teacher said what?!

Was it: Mr Maloney, Mrs Wates, Miss Janyk, Mrs Samuel or Mrs Thomann? Answers at the end...

Teacher A: My family did not speak any foreign languages at home and I began learning French and German at school in year 7. I found it exciting to be able to communicate in a new way and to be able to show off new words to my family. This eventually led me to study languages at university and to living and studying in Bonn in Germany for a year. In the future I hope to learn some Spanish and Italian.

Teacher B: I chose to learn languages, because I wanted to be able to communicate with people when I travel. I also find learning a new language fascinating: it's a bit like a puzzle I need to solve. Learning how people from other countries talk about things makes me see them in a slightly different light.

Teacher C: For me, languages are part of your identity. Learning Languages is a way to better understand people and their culture. I have some disabled relatives, so once I had learnt French, German and Spanish, I continued to learn British Sign Language, which brings a whole different challenge and culture with it.

Teacher D: I did not choose to learn any languages; just like Obelix fell into a cauldron of magic potion as a baby, I was born into a bilingual, French and German area of France. (Alsace). Because of the many Franco-Prussian conflicts and later the 2 WW, not two generations ever spoke the same language. My parents and grandparents always spoke German to me, and I did not speak French until the age of 3; which I learnt when I started school.

With this advantage on my side, I took to learning other languages like a duck to water: English, Spanish, a bit of Norwegian and some Welsh.

Answers: Teacher A: Mr Maloney, Teacher B: Miss Janyk, Teacher C: Mrs Wates, Teacher D: Mrs Thomann, Teacher E: Mrs Samuel.



...Faculty Updates...



Languages BSL Club Update

Following the exciting news that BSL will become a GCSE qualification from September 2025, we are researching the signs, vocabulary and knowledge needed for students to pass this examination. In the meantime, members of the Okehampton College BSL club have been extending their knowledge by learning extra details to add to their sentences such as countries, adjectives of personality, and days of the week.

We asked these students, 'How do you remember all the different signs?'. Here are their replies:

Shavaun: 'When fingerspelling, the alphabet the letters look like the letter shapes!'

Lily: 'I just keep on practising!'

Abi: 'I think you can practise and watch videos, until you get it right!'



The Technology Department have has a busy term so far: in Year 11, the Catering and Hospitality students have worked hard on their practical coursework with some great results. GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition students have completed their food science experiment part of their coursework and are currently working hard on their second piece of assessed coursework for their controlled practical after half term.

In Year 10, we are focusing on the commodity dairy and practical skills such as timing and presentation. Their most recent challenge was to produce and decorate a fatless sponge gateaux, the results were fantastic! (pictures attached)

Our after school baking club is with Year 9 this term and they have made some excellent bakes including sausage rolls: demonstrating lamination by making their own rough puff pastry.



Holocaust Memorial Day

*Written by Year 9 Student,
Lily Thorne*



Overall, the Holocaust Memorial Day felt like a day of unity among the Devon community. We started off with the opening ceremony which took place in Exeter Cathedral. Lots of people talked about the roots of the Holocaust and the causes of genocide and what we need to do to prevent such events happening again. There was a candle lighting ceremony in which two of our Okehampton College sixth formers lit candles along with the other representatives.

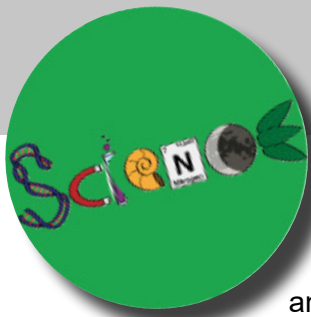
After we left the cathedral, we had a short break before heading to the Southernhay United Reform Church where we learnt about the life of Otto Deutsch as a 'Kindertransport child' from Austria. After this we watched a short film about the Nazi genocide of the Gypsy, Roma and Sinti people presented by Lizzie who answered our questions and talked about the negativity and racism towards gypsies today that goes unchallenged.

Finally, there was a talk from David Tollerton from Exeter University about the roots of the Holocaust and persecution of Jews throughout history. The day was an opportunity to remember and reflect on all the lives lost and appreciate the freedoms we often take for granted.

I felt as though it was an honour to be able to attend the events and listen to other people's stories that need to be told to keep the painful but important memories of the Holocaust and other genocides alive to ensure history does not repeat itself.



...Faculty Updates...



2024 marks the 30th anniversary of British Science Week, a ten-day celebration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. The theme for 2024 is 'Time' which opens the door to a huge range of topics for learners, clubs, communities, and families to explore. The next British Science Week will take place from the 8th to the 17th of March, and we will be incorporating the theme of time into science lesson throughout the week. The theme got me thinking about the nature of time... we all experience time, it is always there, moving forward from past to present to future, we can measure it and define it, time can creep slowly or seem to stop, and time can fly when we're having fun...

The question is, are these features real or constructs of human mentality? Einstein would argue that time is not absolute and the rate at which time flows depends where you are and how fast you are travelling: moving clocks run slow, a fact that has been built into satellite design (clocks in GPS satellites in space appear to run faster by about 38 microseconds a day than the clocks in GPS receivers on earth!)

Our understanding of time flow started with the correlation between observable cycles of nature, from the moving constellations to cycles of the moon. Our ancestors relied on circadian rhythms which influenced sleep, appetite, body temperature. In humans, nearly every tissue and organ has its own circadian rhythm, and collectively they are tuned to the daily cycle of day and night. Human nature being what it is, our ancestors had to quantify time into calendars, so they knew when to plant crops or move their herds. However, this wasn't always a success. The Romans used a calendar that was 355 days long (the Earth takes 365 days, 5 hours, 59 minutes, and 16 seconds to orbit the Sun), so had to add months to keep in synch with the solar year. When Julius Caesar came to power in the first century BCE, he introduced the use of the Egyptian solar calendar to solve the problem. It almost matched the solar year but was still 11 minutes off... the calendar gained one day every 128 years. 1500 years later Pope Gregory XIII adjusted the calendar with 365 days for 3 years and one extra day, February 29th, every fourth year.

Plants, like animals use their circadian rhythm to measure time, even when there is no light – they

don't just respond to sunrise, they know it is coming and adjust their biology accordingly. The ability to keep time gives plants a competitive advantage and is vital in biological processes such as flowering, fragrance emission and leaf movement. Researchers from Cambridge University have discovered that the sugars produced in photosynthesis are key to timekeeping.

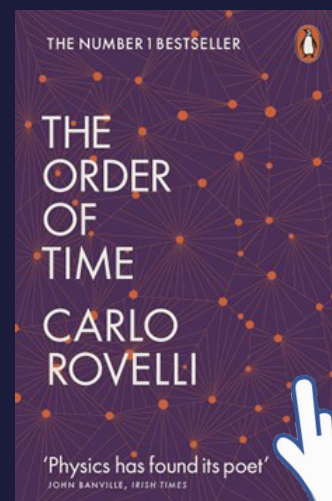
In a matter of months, two different groups of "periodical" cicadas in mid and southeast America will emerge simultaneously from their underground burrows. The two groups have 13- and 17-year breeding cycles, and this is the first time their emergence has been aligned since 1803! One theory suggests that they use environmental cues from tree sap to mark the passage of time.

If you would like to find out more, I can recommend *The Order of Time* by Carlo Rovelli. If you have the time, listen to him explaining the nature of time in this lecture:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrjFE_Rd2OQ



A periodical cicada



...Head of Year Updates...



A WORD
FROM:

Mr Parker

Head of
Year 7

As we approach February half term this signifies that we are halfway through the school year. Although January has connotations of being dark and rainy we were lucky enough to be treated with a glorious dry day when we took over 200 Year 7s to Paignton Zoo on the 26th January. The students were a real credit to themselves and the college in the way that they conducted themselves around the park and I was complimented by several members of the public on their conduct around the site and the respect and sensitivity that they showed to the animals was impeccable.

The Year 7 and 8 Eco-Warriors with the support of Miss Ewen gave assemblies to all year groups. It was really positive seeing Year 7 students taking a leadership role in delivering assemblies to other year groups and delivering with such passion on a subject. Well done to all the students involved on standing up for something that they believe in.



A WORD
FROM:

Mrs Ashelford

Head of
Year 8

It is hard to imagine that we are already halfway through the academic year. From entering the school as the small people of Year 7 it has been wonderful to watch the progression of each and everyone of the now bigger and better Year 8s. Their attitude, to learn and absorb all that is on offer in this diverse environment, is just wonderful. They, as a cohort, have wracked up the most achievement points for kindness and this is evident in the way that they treat each other and the smaller Year 7s, some of whom are struggling with their transition.

They are a credit to themselves and although the start of the Year 8 road was a little bumpy, by and large this group have been excellent at just being the best they can be. I have personally learnt so much this term and had the opportunity to get to know lots more than I knew before. We have some amazing students competing in all manner of competitions and being totally awesome at them too. In our cohort we have national and even international competitors in a variety of sports.

I am so pleased that so many of them have worked hard to get involved, our theme of the year, during the rest of the spring term we will be investigating this some more and finalizing the projects that they want to do. Enjoy a well earned break all.....



...Head of Year Updates...



A WORD
FROM:

Mrs Wheeler

Head of
Year 9

It has been a very busy half term and as we approach the holiday our attention turns to Curriculum Choices for Year 9. The Curriculum Choices booklet will be available for you to read over the next few weeks, ahead of our Curriculum Choices Evening on Wednesday 28th February 2024 where students and parents/families will have the opportunity to speak to staff and listen to talks about the option process.

In assemblies this half term we have had interesting presentations on Holocaust Memorial Day and several Year 9 students accompanied Mr Sweeney and Mrs White to Exeter Cathedral for a service to mark the day. Year 9 students took part in Cultural Champions, celebrating diversity at the college and we also have our Year 9 Heroes who are supporting Year 7 students. Many of our Year 9 students continue to excel in their sports and hobbies both in and out of college and the benefits of these activities for their wellbeing cannot be underestimated.

A huge thank you to the team who support Year 9- Sam Cleave our Pastoral Support Officer and all the tutor team too. Well done to all the Year 9 students for their hard work and commitment this half term- have a lovely half term.



A WORD
FROM:

Mrs Weigersma

Head of
Year 10

Happy half term Year 10, and what a fantastic half term it has been. We are now halfway through the academic year, and we have mock exams and work experience to look forward to. It was lovely to see so many families attending the recent parent consultations.

On Wednesday 21st February 2024 we are holding a Year 10 Exam Preparation Evening in the Octagon and it would be fantastic to see as many students and their families attend. This evening will hold key information regarding the Year 10 mock examinations which start on Monday 18th March 2024.

We have also been focusing on work experience placements, encouraging students to log into their Grofar accounts and enter their work experience placements. If a student is unsure of that they would like to do they can enter their details to see what types of placements can be recommended based upon their interests.

I hope that you all have a relaxing half term and return ready for the challenges ahead.

...Head of Year Updates...



**A WORD
FROM:**
Mrs Hodgson
**Head of
Year 11**

The start of the mock exams have been a success for Year 11, the students have been dedicated and settled during this time and it has been lovely to see groups of students with revision cards out before the exam, testing each other. I am, as always, so proud of every student.

When we return after half term, the exams will creep up on us very quickly and it is normal to feel worried and stressed. Talk to one another, support one another, you are not alone in the way that you are feeling. This is the time for us to all look after each other and be a team. I want to take this opportunity to remind students of the Exam Support Sessions that are run by Pete and Kyra every Tuesday break 2 and after school, and every Thursday break 2 in the conference room in Maths. Please use this, it will help to have someone to talk to.

One more exciting date to put in your diary, YEAR 11 PROM!! 27th June 2024 at Fingle Glen.

Have a wonderful half term and make sure you look after yourselves!



**A WORD
FROM:**
Mr Biddle
**Head of
Post-16**

Students in Post-16 have been working hard in preparation for their up-coming mock exams. Part of the preparation for this process has been linked to reflecting on prior success and challenges, and setting targets for their next steps to success. In addition to these tutor based activities, all pupils have recently received an progress update against their Personal Development Award; we currently have four students achieving the Gold standard and look forward to rewarding their efforts in the summer graduation event.

The students have also received a recent announcement linked to the Year 13 Summer ball. The date for this is set as 5th July 2024 and all pupils are encouraged to “save the date”. We are also looking forward to taking our Year 12 students out for their first visit to a University, combined with a social event at Lazertag! Lots of fun things happening in Post-16.





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Enrichment Programme

Spring Term 2024

ACTIVITY / CLUB	FOR YEAR GROUP	DAY	TIME	ROOM	STAFF NAME	FURTHER INFO
Fitness Club	Year 10, 12 & 13	Monday	Break 1	Fitness Suite / Gym	KR	
Art	Years 10 & 11	Monday	Break 2	302	KD	
Music Tech Club	All Years	Monday	Break 2	304	FRAC	
Home Learning Club	All Years	Monday	After School	64.4	KS, LRD	Computers available for use
Maths in Art	Year 9	Monday	Break 2	302	MTI	
Big Band	Grade 3+	Tuesday	After School	503	JBT	
The Great Okehampton Bake off	Year 7	Tuesday	After School	617	ND	Students will need to provide their ingredients, they'll be out each week what we're cooking the following week
Eco Club	Year 7 & 8	Tuesday	Break 1	418	LEW	
Netball	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Astro	KR, LO, JJ	
Volleyball	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Parklands	CSC	
Cricket (Boys)	All Years	Tuesday	After School	OS4	KMH	
Fitness	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Gym	MMB	
Board Games Club	All Years	Tuesday	After School	502	QWC	
Badminton	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Parklands	NW	
Friendship / Computer Club	Year 7	Tuesday	Break 1 & 2	614	LJD	
Manga Club	All Years	Tuesday	After School	304	EAT	
Drama Club: Panto Pandemonium!	Year 7 & 8	Tuesdays	After School	621	MT	
Drama Club: Styles of Drama	Year 9	Tuesdays	After School	617	GN	
Drama Intervention	Year 11	Tuesdays	After School	615	LR	
Maths Practice Paper Club	Year 11	Tuesday	After School	203	KAC	
Maths Practice Paper Club	Year 11	Tuesday	After School	205	SLC	
Home Learning Club	All Years	Tuesday	After School	64.4	KS, LRD	Computers available for use
Dungeons & Dragons	All Years	Wednesday	Break 2	423	SAG	
Sign Language	All Years	Wednesday	Break 2	407	CW	
German GCSE Tips	Year 11	Wednesday	Break 2	620	GM	
French GCSE Tips	Year 11	Wednesday	Break 2	619	LKS	
Friendship / Computer Club	Year 7	Wednesday	Break 1 & 2	614	LJD	
Jam Band	All Years	Wednesday	Break 2	503	JBT	
Big Band	TBC	Wednesday	Break 1	503	JBT	
Textiles & Art	Years 10 & 11	Wednesday	Break 2	303	DM	
Geography Club	Year 7 & 8	Wednesday	Break 2	425	SIF	Geography
Chess Club	All Years & Abilities	Wednesday	Break 2	413	SL, RKB	
Poetry by Heart	All Years	Wednesday	Break 1	618	EL, CE	
Pride Alliance	All Years	Thursday	Break 2	406	MG, LK, CSC	
Friendship / Computer Club	Year 7	Thursday	Break 1 & 2	614	LJD	
Art & Photography GCSE Catch Up	Years 10 & 11	Thursday	Break 2	303	VH	
Drama Intervention	Year 11	Thursday	After School	614	LR	
Junior Choir	Year 7	Thursday	Break 1	503	JBT	
Origami Club	Year 10	Thursday	Break 2	202	MTI	
Table Tennis	All Years	Thursday	After School	Gym	NW	
Cricket (Girls)	All Years	Thursday	After School	Parklands	KMH	
History Mystery Club	Year 7, 8, 9	Thursday	After School	423	SJS	
Coding Club	Year 10, 11, 12, 13	Thursday	After School	613	RDH	
Science Club	Year 7, 8, 9	Thursday	After School	411	EM	
Cricket	Year 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15	Thursday	Break 1	504	PKL	
Running Club (Students & Staff)	All Years	Thursday	After School	College Grounds	QWC	
Folk Group	All Years/Abilities	Friday	Break 1	503	TBC	
Language Leaders	Year 9	Friday	Break 2	404	VAT	
Friendship / Computer Club	Year 7	Friday	Break 1 & 2	614	LJD	
GCSE German Speaking & Writing Preparation	Year 11	Friday	Break 2	407	CW	
Art & Photography GCSE Catch Up	Years 10 & 11	Friday	Break 2	304	EAT	
Market Watch (Business)	All Years	Friday	Break 1	615	LTJ	
Quiet Room	Every Day	Every Day	Break 1 & 2	630	SEND Faculty	SEND
Film Club	All Years	Every Day	Break 1 & 2	633	SEND Faculty	

LATE BUSES RUN ON TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS



TRIPLE P FOR LGBT+ PARENTS OF CHILDREN 2-12

Triple P is programme that teaches parenting skills. This 8 week course is for LGBT+ parents of 2-12 year olds.

WEEKLY
Thursday 22nd February - Thursday 11th April
6.30pm-8.30pm

For more details and to book your place, check our Eventbrite:



0800 612 3010
help@intercomtrust.org.uk



The Mossy Carpet and Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes come to Okehampton

A free opportunity for all to join in with The Mossy Carpet and to tell us what you think about the nature around Okehampton

At the Eco-hub by Okehampton College EX20 1PZ
19th - 25th February
10am - 3.00pm
(closed Wednesday)



Pop in to help us make The Mossy Carpet display and leave your views about how you access nature.

An area-based partnership supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund and led by Dartmoor National Park Authority, RSPB, Sustrans and the Woodland Trust.



Please click on these icons to view the 2024 - 2025 Term Dates and also the Okehampton College canteen menus. Alternatively visit our website;
www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk

Term Dates



WISERMONEY

What's here for you and your family?
Pop in, have fun and find out!

Friday March 8th 3-6pm
Community Wellbeing Fair
Hatherleigh Community Centre, EX20 3HB

- Learn something new
- Energy saving freebies and tips
- Money and debt help
- Help and info
- Free hot food and drink
- Have your say
- Get healthy
- Make your community safer

Drop in, find out what's here, celebrate your community!
For more information please contact Billie Barnett of West Devon CVS
07704 155884 Email: billie@westdevon.org.uk

- Hosted by Navigate CIO in partnership with West Devon CVS
- All welcome!
- See you there!

DISCOVER LIFE FROM A NEW ANGLE



YOUTH ARTS & HEALTH TRUST
Snap up this opportunity to learn new digital skills and tips from a professional photographer. Discover how to take amazing photos and explore exciting new places in a supportive and relaxed group.

Adventure across Dartmoor and in Exeter's museum (RAMM) with photographer Jo Bradford, getting creative and discovering new things.

There will be an exhibition at RAMM where you can show off your creative endeavours to celebrate what you've achieved.

Email info@youthartsandhealth.org to find out more about the Dartmoor Frame of Mind project.



ATTENTION

TEEN'S SPACE AT THE WELL-BEING CAFE

14 St James Street, Okehampton
Every Wednesday 3.15pm - 5.30pm
First drink free & free food option
FREE WIFI



Age 11 - 17 years
Pop in for a drink!
07455156423

wellbeingcafe@my-way.org.uk

