

26 May 2023

# OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE



Newsletter  
Issue 7

## Highlights

- Normandy Trip
- Student News
- HOY Updates

At  We are

Kind

Tolerant

Respectful

Independent

Committed

Resilient

Hardworking

Responsible

## Vice Principal's Message; Marc Cooper



At last, the sun is shining, and we have moved out of the long, dark winter months and spring is quickly turning towards the summer months. Spring bring promise and we are now transitioning into the glorious longer days and the warm evenings of summer. There are many benefits associated with this time of year as we get to spend more time outside, more time with friends and family, and the calmer weather allow us to breathe a little deeper.

For our young people, sunshine provides a natural boost, which is essential for both their physical and mental health. The increase in Vitamin D will aid their growth and development, the time to play with friends and go on adventures, will bolster their levels of oxytocin giving them a greater sense of belonging, and help raise their self-esteem.

We have already seen these benefits in action with many of our pupils. The courageous Ten Tors participants, collaborating together, drawing on their collective strengths to complete an incredibly arduous challenge. The pride with which they were greeted by friends and family at the end of the trek will be held in their memories for many years to come. The Year 7 Transition Leaders have been incredible ambassadors for the college and community, supporting the Year 6 pupils as they explored Normandy, developing their leadership skills and supporting their peers.

We hope that the half-term break will allow all of our community some time to reflect in their progress this year and make the most of the independence and freedom that a holiday brings.

**Marc Cooper**  
Vice Principal

## Important Dates

- Friday 26th May - Last day of half term
- Monday 5th June - All pupils return
- Friday 30th June - Year 11 and 13 Leavers Balls
- Monday 10th - Friday 14th July - Enrichment Week & Year 10 Work Experience
- Wednesday 19th July - Last day of Summer Term

# ...Transition Leaders Visit Normandy...

The year 7 transition leaders along with Mrs Griggs and Mr Parker have just come back from an action-packed week away in Normandy, France supporting some of our year 6 students from across the trust, many of whom will be attending Okehampton College in September.

Our students did a fantastic job supporting the younger students who for many it was their first trip away from their families.

Some of the highlights of the trip were a visit to Mont St Michel, the British War Memorial in Normandy, and the Bayeux Tapestry.

The students really enjoyed practicing their French, Isobel who attended the trip said that “visiting the market and practising our French was a great and fun opportunity”

A large part of the trip was dedicated to looking at the history of the area, in particular the D day landings and the subsequent Battle of Normandy. On reflection Izzy thought “that going to Normandy was amazing! We learnt loads of cool things about WWII, it really put it into perspective about how it impacted the area. It was also great to reconnect with some old friends from Primary school”.

The year 7 transition leaders will be supporting the year 6's along their journey into year 7 in September. A big thank you to all 21 of the transition leaders that supported the year 6's across the week.

For a full report of our visit to Normandy please Click on the logo below.





# ...Student News...



Our Youth Culture Champions attended a celebratory workshop on Friday 21st April where they carried out a bonfire ritual and later received certificates..

This group have worked positively and respectfully together throughout the course, and we are proud of their achievements. We aim to continue to meet as a group in order to plan how we can disperse their experience and skills gained during this course throughout the College.

Well done Youth Culture Champions, your approach to this program has been very impressive and inspiring and you will be role models for our future work and our future champions!

## Marathon Success!

Year 13 Student, Jennifer Mears ran her first London Marathon this year and completed it in a fantastic 4 hours and 12 minutes!



In April, 3 students at Okehampton Collegerepresented Okehampton Otters Swimming Club at the South West

Regional Championships; Between them, out of the 6 events, they came away with 4 personal bests. Notably, Club Captain Finley Molyneux marginally missed out in the final on a bronze medal in the 50m breaststroke, coming 4th place. To be 4th fastest in any event, in the whole of the South West, is a huge achievement, particularly as this is the highest placing any Okehampton Otter has ever come at this competition.

If anyone is interested in joining Okehampton Otters Swimming Club you can drop us an email at [otterscomms@hotmail.com](mailto:otterscomms@hotmail.com). Whether you are fresh out of swim school, for fitness or like these 3 swimmers, wish to compete we have different squads to cater for all abilities.

Regional Championships; this is the second year in the row we have had 3 swimmers from Okehampton qualify for these championships.

Abigail Graves – Girls Vice Captain (Yr8), Finley Molyneux – Boys Captain (Yr10) and Ben Webster – Boys Vice Captain (Yr10) qualified for 6 events between them, which took place over a period of two weekends.

The swimmers qualified for the following events: Abigail Graves - 50m breaststroke; Finley Molyneux – 50m and 100m breaststroke; Ben Webster – 50m and 100m backstroke, 50m freestyle.

Their coaches Jessica James and Claire Graves commented 'We are so proud of all three of them; they work so hard in training and it has been their goal this year to qualify for the regionals. To have achieved their goals is a great achievement and hopefully one they can aim for again next year.'





# ...Ten Tors 2023...



The threatening beauty of the mighty Dartmoor attracted a great number of highly motivated and resilient individuals to the challenge of Ten Tors this year. Throughout the bleak, cool and often wet months of January, February and March the students completed expeditions of varying lengths in order to prepare them for the main event in late April.

Arriving at dawn each weekend the small band of year 10, 11 and 12 students would gather and organise themselves for the day ahead. An even smaller team of dedicated staff would weave around the challengers checking and briefing them for the day of weekend ahead. Unlike many years this year's cohort quickly proved their ability to cope with the conditions and navigation on the moor so much so that groups were not accompanied on their second walk but checkpointed or followed at a distance. The teams managed the responsibility of being independent admirably and their confidence grew, as did their ability to work closely together to support each other through the challenges they faced.

Their first main obstacle was camping in sub-zero temperatures which they all survived without too many complaints, although Mr Parker regretted his choice of accommodation for the night having decided to leave his tent at home! The distance was easily consumed by each team and they eagerly prepared for the next weekend trip which turned into a battle against the weather and darkness with all the teams arriving in swirling mist and drizzle on Great Mis Tor in zero visibility. Amazingly all teams found the camp and resolutely put-up tents, made dinner and got to sleep ready for another 05:30 wake up! Their greatest success, and test came on the last weekend of training where all teams covered a considerable distance (partially due to chasing lambs and runaway dogs) and arrived to camp, in the dark, in appallingly wet weather. All continued to act maturely, kindly and stoically.

So an outstanding group of students completed the training and so many had completed the training that we had to take the rare steps of having to select the 4 teams of students to enter the event which is testament to the quality of those involved in the process.

The 4 teams all successfully completed the event alongside 2500 other amazing young people during the last weekend in April watched, admired and cheered on by their friends, family and staff from the college.

Many thanks to the incredible sacrifice and dedication which the staff make for the success of the training, I am overwhelmed with how much they do. Whether its standing on a windswept Tor for hours on end, hiding in a cave waiting for a group to arrive, waking up at terrifyingly early hours on a Sunday morning, repeatedly getting soaked all weekend or putting up students tents in freezing conditions at 22:00 before they have even sorted their own tent out, all have done this with a smile and then they do it again the next weekend. A huge congratulations to all students for completing this incredible and lifechanging challenge. Well done.

# ...Faculty Updates...



Sport and Physical activity, at least in my opinion, is one of life's great pleasures. We believe as a PE department and college that Sport and Physical activity should be open to all and take pleasure in exposing our students to a wide range of activities – with the hope that we create life long participants.

Part of our ongoing work to show the students the range of activities, inspire the next generation and teach our students about the World of sport we were lucky enough to have ex professional basketball player and head coach of the Exeter Otters wheelchair basketball team, Jack Davey, run a series of workshops with some of our students.

With 10 wheelchairs ready to go, each hour of the day was dedicated to a different year group with 20 students from each year having the opportunity to take

part in wheelchair basketball. Wheelchair basketball, although a disability sport is open to all people, whether they use a wheelchair or not. Wheelchair basketball has the great leveller that once all players are in a wheelchair they can all play the same game, together.

The difficulty of trying to move a chair and dribble a basketball was both rewarding and frustrating, giving our students the opportunity to see how resilient they were and with focus, the rapid improvement that was possible.

We hope to put on more of these days for more of our pupils – the positive feedback and smiling faces was inspiring for all of us.

Any student who is keen to take part can go along to play with the Exeter Otters – Every Saturday from 2-4pm at Wonford Leisure Centre, Exeter.

<https://exeterotterswbc.weebly.com/>



## This GiRL CAN!

Okehampton Rugby Club's Girls teams are looking for more players to join them. If you are aged 10-14 in September, get in touch!  
Fun guarenteed!



Contact Coach Alfie on 07799778779  
[p.r.alford@btinternet.com](mailto:p.r.alford@btinternet.com)

Try it  
Play it  
LOVE IT



## Enrichment Programme



Activity/Club	For Year Groups	Day	Time	Room	Staff Name	Further Info
Athletics	All Years	Thursday	After School	Field	Miss Wilcock & Mr Bailey	
Badminton	Years 9 & 10	Tuesday	After School	Parklands	Miss Wilcock	
Basketball	Year 10	Thursday	After School	Parklands	Basketball Leaders	
Big Band	Year 8-13 or younger depending on grade	Tuesday	After School	Room 503	Mrs Teixeira	Grade 3 plus (or equivalent). This ensemble does public concerts so a good level of commitment is required.
Chess Club	All Years	Friday	Break 2	Room 413	Mrs Bertram Miss Littlewood-Horner	All Welcome! Any ability and level
College Choir	All Years	Thursday	Break 2	Room 504	Mrs McDougall (singing teacher) Mrs Teixeira	Everyone Welcome, staff included!
CrickeT (Boys)	Boys All Years	Tuesday	After School	Field	Mr Harris	
CrickeT (Girls)	Girls All Years	Thursday	After School	Field	Mr Harris	
Dodgeball (Girls)	Girls All Years	Tuesday	Break 2	Gym	Miss Wilcock	
Drama Club	Years 7, 8, 9	Tuesday	After School	Room 621	Ms Turner & Ms Neilsen	
Fitness	All Years	Wednesday	Break 2	Gym	Mr Bailey	
Home Learning Club	All Years	Monday and Tuesday	After School	Library Computer Room	Mrs Speak Mrs Duffy	
Little Big Band / Training Band	All Years	Friday	Break 2	Room 503	Mrs Teixeira	For beginners and more
Manga Art Club	All Years	Thursday	After School	Room 304	Miss Arden-Trew	
Quiet Room	All Years	Every Day	Break 1 and Break 2	Room 630	Mrs Speak Mrs Harding Mrs Duffy Miss Lloyd	
Rounders Club	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Bottom field	Miss Redstone	
Science	Years 7, 8, 9	Tuesday	After School	Room 411	Ms Morrison	
Bronze Crest Award	All Years	Tuesday	After School	Field	Mr Collins	
String Group	All Years	Friday	Break 1	Room 503	Mrs Van Hoolton (String Teacher) Mrs Babichev	All welcome Beginners to Advanced level
Trampoline Club	Year 7 and 8	Monday	Break 2	Gym	Miss Redstone	
Year 11 Exam Paper Club	Year 11	Tuesday	After School	Room 214	Mrs Carter	Runs until the final exam!



# ...Faculty Updates...



Year 9 food preparation and nutrition students were tasked with becoming artisan gourmet burger makers and they did a brilliant job! They researched and planned their ingredients, preparation, cooking and presentation and very much enjoyed the “quality control” testing at the end!”



## SEND Faculty Information



### SEND Clinic

If you have a child on the SEND register, we would like to invite you to attend our **SEND Clinic on the 15th June 2023**. The session starts with a ‘Let’s talk about... Dyslexia’ followed by a 1:1 consultation with the SEND team to review individual learning plans. Please look out for a letter that is coming out on timings and how to book a place. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Devon SEND Local Offer

The Devon SEND Local Offer is a useful website that helps you find out about how to access support services available in Devon. There are upcoming courses, webinars and useful resources available for parents/ carers, The links below will take you to the Devon Local Offer and events that may be of interest to you.

- Devon’s SEND Local Offer - help and support for children with SEND. [Click here.](#)
- Events – Education and Families (devon.gov.uk) [Click here.](#)

# ...Head of Year Updates...



A WORD  
FROM:

Mr Barker

Head of  
Year 7

Dear Year 7,

With five of the six half terms completed you are into the home stretch for year 7, and you have definitely settled in well to life at Okehampton College. So many of you are starting to show what wonderful people you are, and this is reflected by almost 130,000 positive points achieved between you, an average on 566 each! In particular, I would like to congratulate Luke on being the first student to get his platinum badge this year, what a great achievement.

Very sadly, this will be my last involvement with Year 7. As you are now aware Mrs Ashelford has taken over as Head of Year 7; I am very pleased that she has, and I am confident that she will be a great support to you all going forward. It has been a delight and pleasure to be your Head of Year

For my final message to you, please remember the few things we have been able to look at in the short time I was your head of year; live up to the OKE8 habits, but if you ever forget them all then remember that the most important thing in life is to be kind and do your best. Get involved, try out new things, look after the people around you, and enjoy life.



Dear Year 8

We are rapidly approaching the last half term of the year and then you will be in Year 9. Next year you will be choosing your options and making decisions about your future. Before we get to Year 9, we have a number of opportunities to look forward to.

The next Extended Learning Day is on 20th June and then later in the term we have Sports Day and Enrichment Week. I know that you are all looking forward to your activities, days out and for some of you, a chance to go abroad. Enrichment Week is a fantastic opportunity to make new friends and for staff to get to know students better too.

The Year 8 team are all very proud of how well the Year 8s have conducted themselves this term around the College and in lessons. Many teachers have commented on their engagement with their learning and the Okey 8 habits they illustrate everyday.

I would like to thank the Year 8 tutors and our Assistant Head of Year Mr Turnbull for all their hard working supporting our young people and ensuring they have the best experience whilst they are in with us at Okehampton College.

Have a lovely, and hopefully, sunny half term



A WORD  
FROM:

Mrs Wheeler

Head of  
Year 8

# ...Head of Year Updates...



A WORD  
FROM:

Mrs Wiegersma

Head of  
Year 9

Hello Year 9,

Wow, what a fabulous half term we have had. It was lovely to see so many of you come into College for the choices evening and at the 1:1 online sessions. Following this process, all students have now picked their choices and the next two years are in front of us. In two year's time, we will be putting our well-practiced line up skills to the test and entering the hall for the GCSE exams. Although this feels a long way off, it will come around quickly, and we need to make the most of the time that we have in lessons. The remaining time in this academic year needs to be focused on developing an independent work ethic that is going to support our learning in the future. Take the time to enjoy all your lessons, even if you are not taking them next year.

We have so much to look forward to next half term. We had our first student gain their platinum badge this week and I'm hoping that we are going to be able to hand out more of them along with the bronze, silver and gold badges... there is so much to work towards.

Curriculum Extension Week is only a few weeks away and it's going to be a good one. Enjoy your well earned half term break and let's be ready to have a fantastic half term when we return!



A WORD  
FROM:

Mrs Hodgson

Head of  
Year 10

Happy Half Term Year 10!

What a half term it has been with your Year 10 exams and your first experience of what it is going to be like in the exam hall. I had so many compliments from senior members of staff about your conduct throughout this period, well done! It is always so nice to boast about you to other members of staff.

With Work Experience around the corner, I am really pleased that most of you have managed to sort a placement independently. Don't forget to ensure you know the timings of your placement, what the dress code is and what you need to bring every day. I look forward to hearing all about your experiences and adventures on your return.

I hope you all have a restful half term and enjoy the sunshine.



# ...Head of Year Updates...



A WORD  
FROM:

Mr Wilson

Head of  
Year 11

I hope this finds you well.

With the GCSE examinations well under way, it is important that all students maintain good routines, have a structured revision programme at home and attend the subject booster sessions that are timetabled across the school week. Mr White has been sharing this information via Class Charts. Even at this stage, engaging with every learning opportunity and developing good habits are arguably more important now than they have ever been.

Faculties will continue to offer subject specific booster sessions, in addition to the English & Maths Intervention sessions that take place during tutor time. This provision will extend throughout the exam period. We ask for your support in encouraging your child to maintain a high attendance to these sessions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you as parents/carers. This is also a time where we are not always sure how to best support our children. My advice is to keep encouraging them to give their very best, encouraging them to access the opportunities that have been put in place and reminding them how much we all believe in them. I have been hugely impressed by the way the year group have conducted themselves so far and I look forward to celebrating the successes of our Year 11 students in August during GCSE results day.

#### **Year 11 Dates for your Diary:**

- Summer GCSE Exams commenced last week and run until the contingency date of 28th June 2023. Please note that the exam board are required to add contingency days at the end of the exam period in case any of the examinations are rescheduled during the examination season. Your child must therefore be available to sit exams until Wednesday 28 June.
- Leavers Book & Leavers Hoodies order should be made by 31st May via the details shared from Mrs Thompson in the Curriculum Support Office. Please contact [ltompson@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:ltompson@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk) should you have any questions.
- Leavers Assembly in the Octagon Theatre: 14:00 – 15:20 on 16th June 2023. This date has been selected as it is the last time the year group are together where there is no exam.
- Year 11 Leavers Ball will take place at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum on Friday 30th June 2023.
- GCSE Results Day is 24th August 2023.

I would like to wish you all a well-deserved half term break.



# ...Music News...



Congratulations to the fifty three piano and woodwind students who were participants in our concert last evening. It is wonderful to see this concert back on our calendar and the evening offers both novice and more experienced soloists the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience. The Octagon theatre was full and the students showed great resilience and composure in their preparation, listening and performance skills. Thank you to our visiting music tutors, Mrs Zinnia Williams and Mrs Michelle Osborne for organising the concert and giving the students this wonderful and enriching performance opportunity. Well done everyone! Mrs Teixeira--



The Music Department took 21 students to perform on the Radio Exe stage at the Devon County Show today. Our students performed brilliantly and their composure under pressure was really pleasing to witness. A big thank you to Mr Miller for accompanying the group and supporting the developing rhythm section in what was their first gig on a big stage. For Ciaran, Lily and Becky, this was their last concert at DCS and they absolutely played and sang their hearts out. It has been a real privilege to be part of their musical journey over the past 7 years and we wish them the very best of luck in their exams and for the future.--



[www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk](http://www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk)



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Dartmoor  
Multi Academy  
Trust

...everyone in our Trust.

