

OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE

Newsletter
Issue 2

Highlights

- Black History Month
- Head of Year Updates
- Student For The Chop!

At  We are

Kind Tolerant

Respectful Independent

Committed Resilient

Hardworking Responsible

Important Dates



Vice Principal's Message; Phil Ruse



Over the last week I have been in the privileged position of carrying out a series of teaching and learning reviews across our different faculties. This review work involves learning walks, lesson drop ins, work scrutiny and student voice. As a new member of staff, spending so much time in the classroom has given me a fantastic insight into the curriculum and everyday experience are students are exposed to at Okehampton College. Hopefully the words and pictures on the following pages give a taste of the fantastic learning and engagement I have witnessed.

This week saw a packed Octagon with over 250 Year 11 students and their families in attendance for our Countdown to GCSE Evening. This was designed to show the importance of the school working smartly with home to ensure our students can achieve to the best of their ability over the course of the year and set themselves up for the next step on their educational pathway. We look forward to welcoming other year groups and their families to attend similar evenings over the course of the year.

We are pleased to advise that soon we will be launching our summer Enrichment Week programme which will take place between 10th and 14th July 2023 for students in years 7, 8 and 9. (These dates may include weekends for residential trips). This week is an extension to our curriculum and we believe is a fantastic opportunity for students to make new friends and everlasting memories, whilst benefiting from a wide range of enrichment opportunities.

We are currently working on our booklet which will be available online during November; students will be able to choose from a variety of residencies in the UK or abroad and day trips or activities in school. Deposits will be required in early December to secure a place on your child's chosen trip. We look forward to launching Enrichment Week 2023 in due course!

- Monday 25th - Friday 28th October - Half Term
- Monday 31st October - All Students Return
- Monday 14th November Year 11 Internal Exams begin
- Wednesday 23 November Year 13 Parents Evening Online

Teaching and Learning at Okehampton College

English Faculty

I began my week in the English faculty. Students spoke at length about how they enjoyed the familiarity of their English lessons and how they are able to spend time analysing texts and the complex vocabulary they are exposed to. In several key stage 4 lessons I saw students analyse and annotate key quotes from their texts, whether that be a Shakespearian play, An Inspector Calls novel or a short story or poem. Frequently this is the prelude to some extended writing linked to clear success criteria. In key stage 3 lessons I was drawn to the back of student exercise books. Here you can find their fortnightly creative writing challenges. These are individual, creative responses to a visual or written stimulus. Never underestimate the imagination of a year 7 student using words to paint their own vivid imagery!

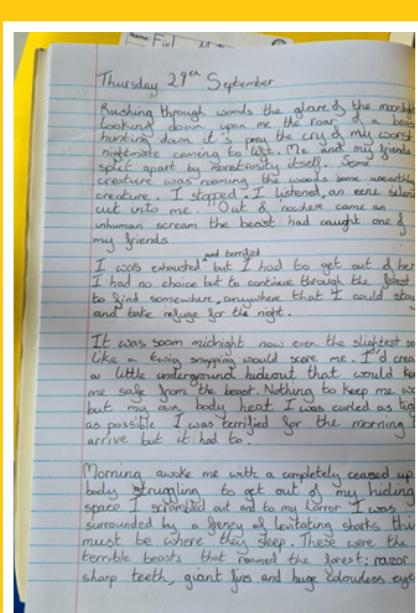
PE

I was delighted to see a mild, dry day signal the start of my time in PE! The variety of sports and physical activity I saw was a real eye opener. On just one day I saw students playing and participating in rugby, football, netball, basketball, lacrosse, orienteering, fitness work, dodgeball and handball. I was really struck by how our PE staff made considerate and appropriate adaptations to make the PE lessons accessible to all students. The conditions were created for everyone to experience success, regardless of their starting point. The result was high levels of engagement and enjoyment. Whatever the sport or technical level on show, there was always a clear focus on specific teaching points. Whether that may be a bounce pass in basketball, an aerial pass in lacrosse or the importance of positioning in netball the teachers and students would often model and demonstrate these key learning points. The highlight for me was seeing a group of Year 10 girls enjoy their first match situation of lacrosse. The positivity created at experiencing a new sport was a joy to watch.

Technology



Our technology faculty has an amazing mix of curriculum subjects available to our students. I followed a series of Y11 lessons and was struck by the creativity and high levels of skill within the various discipline that our students possess. In Food & Nutrition we welcomed 2 chefs from the Royal Navy who set up a Masterchef style challenge for our students. After seeing the students manage their time and resources in a real life scenario, I made sure I returned to witness the finished results. Cod fish cakes and sticky toffee pudding! I hope the photos do justice to the amazing food created by some of our talented Year 11s.



Teaching and Learning at Okehampton College

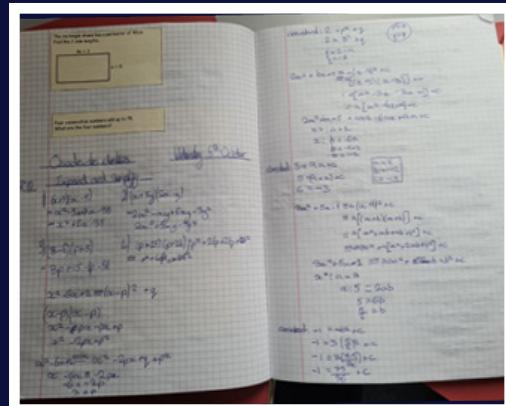
Technology

Over the next hour I saw students completing technical drawing in Engineering design, portfolio design idea work in DT, making pastry in catering and completing their production log for a piece of wooden engineering work. A few common themes emerged for me. Firstly, the skill with which teachers framed this work. Modelling was a common feature across all the technology lessons. Often this involved students seeing the finished product before they started and often having examples from previous students to guide them. Using success criteria is a powerful teaching tool to help guide students to create the best work they are capable of. Secondly, the high levels of creativity students were showing in their work. I was blown away by what I saw. Thirdly, the autonomy shown by students and their ability to show great independence whilst working safely, with staff able to offer useful critique and advice in a constructive way.



Maths

In mathematics, a constant message of resilience was being reinforced as students grappled with often complex mathematical concepts and ideas. Resilience, is of course one of our Oke 8 character habits, and it is essential that these are lived through the curriculum, alongside the wider experience students have at Okehampton College. Modelling and clear explanations are inherent to good maths teaching. Seeing mini white boards used skilfully to encourage students to attempt harder questions and not let the fear of getting an answer wrong hold them back was excellent. As a college we have 'do now' tasks as an integral part of our start of lesson routines. These are routinely on the board as classes enter the room. At their best, they invite students to retrieve prior knowledge by revisiting topics they studied last year, last term and last month.



Dear Parents and Carers,

As part of our work with our community we would like to establish a comprehensive directory of opportunities available to our young people and their families within the town and villages covered by the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust. With this in mind, I would be very grateful if you would be kind enough to complete a brief survey to help us with the development of this directory. The information you share will be anonymous and the survey should take no more than 3 minutes. Please click [here](#) to go straight to the survey.

Please include information for all your children on one survey.

Thank you in advance for your support with this project.

Derrick Brett,
Executive Director of Civic Leadership

**Dartmoor
Multi Academy
Trust**

...everyone in our Trust.

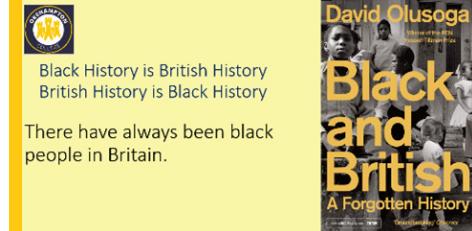


...Black History Month...

October brings the annual Black History Month celebration in the College. Mr Rodgers (Director of Teaching and Learning Humanities and Head of History) delivered assemblies to Years 8 to 11, with Mr Giles delivering to Year 7. The key message this year was acknowledging that "British History is Black History and Black History is British History" by highlighting how historical black people have been living in modern Britain since Roman times and have played an important part in the development of the country.

It was discussed why there is a need for Black History Month through the idea of inventors. Students were able to name white inventors with relative

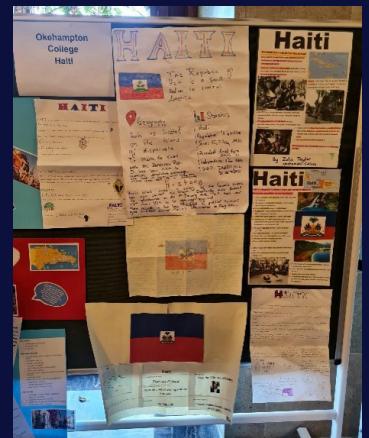
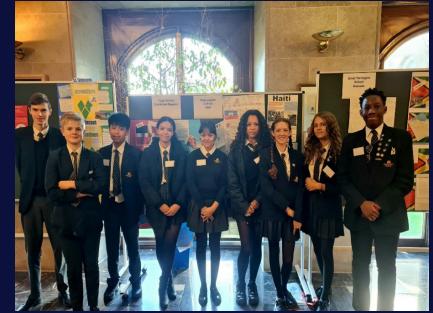
ease but did not know of any black inventors like Garrett Morgan who invented the traffic light, Richard Spikes the automatic gearbox and Otis Boykin the pacemaker. Tutors have been given a BHM calendar that they can use with their groups to learn more about different black people everyday where time allows within the busy tutor programme. The College continues to work on delivering a more diverse curriculum to reflect not only the local community, but the national one also. In particular, Mr Rodgers would like to give particular praise for the ongoing work in the History, Geography, Music and English departments in delivering a more diverse curriculum.



Black History Month provided a fantastic opportunity for nine of our students to attend a student conference in Exeter at County Hall with Mr Rodgers. The conference focused on the impact of Windrush and the Caribbean in Britain since 1948 when 492 passengers disembarked at Port Tilbury having been recruited to fill gaps in the job market post World War Two. Students were able to develop their understanding of why peoples of the Caribbean came to Britain after 1948, who the Windrush Generation were and what the Windrush Scandal was. They were spoken to by Euten Lindsay, a successful chef who had owned his own restaurant and appeared on television with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. However, not long after coming to Plymouth he was made an 'illegal alien' due to the stance of the British government on the Windrush Generation. Euten clearly vocalised the challenges he faced with his status of the time and his difficulties in proving his right to be in Britain. It was a very powerful and heartfelt story. Students were also spoken to

by Dave Samuel whose father was the first black bus driver in Bristol and the challenges he experienced in becoming a driver and afterwards in doing his daily job. There were also different workshops attended by the students on what it meant to be part of the Windrush Generation. Students had been asked to produce a poster on Haiti and it was pleasing to see so many students complete one. In one of the afternoon sessions, students were able to discuss their posters with students from other schools and as well as find out more about other Caribbean countries.

The students found the whole experience informative and enjoyable. They were a real credit to themselves and the College throughout the day.



...Update from Heads of Year...



Year 7 Mr Barker

Congratulations on completing your first half term at Okehampton College, it has been great to see you all settle into your time here so successfully. You have certainly done an amazing job finding your way around the College, one of the first challenges for any student starting secondary school, and I am sure that you have learnt where all the classrooms are much quicker than I did when I started!

Highlights of this half term have included your Humanutopia day and the sponsored walk; the day on Dartmoor was my first day back with you, and it was lovely to see you all complete the challenge with such energy and enthusiasm while getting to know the other members of your tutor group.

I was impressed that you were already able to name all the Oke8 habits during one of our assemblies. We have had a particular focus on the first of these, KIND, and we looked at how care and generosity to those around us will not only help them but also have physical and mental health benefits for ourselves.

Congratulations on leading the way with the positive achievement points on ClassCharts; as a year group you have already been awarded over 25000 points, averaging over 100 points each in just one half term. In September, 99% of the points your year group received were positive, and October will be almost as high again! A special mention goes to Callum in our year who is the first student across the College to reach the bronze award for getting to 250 points.

After a busy first half term, take the opportunity to have a peaceful and relaxing holiday.

Sponsored Walk Update

This year's sponsored walk raised a grand total of £6279.22. Thank you for all your support!

Congratulations to Mrs Wilde's Year 7 Tutor Group who raised the most with a total of £364!

Congratulations also go to Jake Coysh who managed to raise the most sponsorship (£122) as an individual.

Following a donation to Dartmoor National Park the remaining money will be equally split between the Student's chosen charities; Devon Air Ambulance, Cancer Research UK and Refugee Support Devon.



Year 8 Mrs Wheeleker

What a busy half term it has been. Returning to school after such a lovely hot summer can be a challenge but you have settled into the school routine well, adapting to the changes in the school day and the behaviour system.

Many of you have joined break and after school clubs which provide the opportunity to develop new skills and friendships. If you are interested in joining a club, then see the list in your tutor base or speak to your tutor. Each tutor base also has a laminated copy of the Enrichment Programme for the autumn term. You do not have to sign up, you can just turn up and join in. Don't forget there is the school production taking place later next half term, with opportunities to be part of the backstage crew, make up, props and tech. If you would like to get involved, then please speak to your drama teacher.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Turnbull, our assistant Head of Year, for all his hard work this half term. I know he has been supporting Year 8s with mentoring and check-ins. Thank you to our amazing tutors too who work so hard to support you all. Please see your tutor or any member of pastoral team if you need any support or advice. Remember that Wellbeing has a drop-in service on Monday during Break 1 - please ask your tutor for more information.

Have a restful half term.



Year 9 Mrs Clarke

Happy Half Term Year 9! It has been a busy start to our year, but I am proud of how well you have adapted to the changes and in many incidents have impressed us with your engagement with your school life. Significantly, we had Humanutopia support us in our induction days, and I know that many of you found this useful and it showed vulnerability and maturity from many of you. For those students who became our 'heroes' following these sessions, you have represented the College impeccably. The additional training that they have been part of means that they are now able to mentor our younger students, providing a buddy system which will support our students in their transition to secondary education. I could not be prouder of you for this embracing this opportunity.



...Update from Heads of Year...

Our meet the Tutor evening was a great opportunity for you and your parents to continue to build your relationship with your tutors. Remember, they are your first point of call to support and guide you in your college life.

Continue to embrace opportunities that are offered to you, use this time to start to consider your GCSE options as this journey will start soon. We will be here to support you through this process and help you to choose the right path for you.

Take care and enjoy the rest this half term.



Year 11 Mr Wilson

Year 11 Mr Wilson



It is incredible to think we've completed the first half term. That leaves just over 2 terms until our Year 11 students start their final exams! As part of that preparation, we held a Year 11 Parents Information Evening earlier this week. It was wonderful to see so many families back in school for an important event like this, and I'm pleased to report that feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Thank you to those of you who were able to attend.

Moving forward, our thoughts turn to Mock exams which commence on Monday 14th November and will last for a period of 2 weeks. Students will have an exams timetable, so should be using their time constructively in the lead up to these Mocks.

As part of the support we offer in tutor time, Thursday and Friday afternoons have been allocated to 'Future Focus' sessions. These sessions include visits to our Post-16 Centre to look at our offer, careers advice and guidance sessions with Mrs Luckhurst, team building and resilience activities with Mr Collins as well as revision skills, time management and independent learning sessions within the tutor group. This work is ongoing and will span the next two terms leading up to May Half Term.

Furthermore, all Year 11 students have been given a CGP - How to Revise for GCSE - Study Skills & Revision Planner. As always, we will spend time focussing on a range of strategies in lessons and tutor time to help raise aspirations and improve outcomes for each student this academic year. The Revision Planner will remain in school to support the work of tutor time. You can, however, access a free online edition by using the unique code which is on the first page of your son/daughter's book. Please ask them to share that code with you.

Finally, we're in the early stages of making plans to take 'invited' students out in the Spring Term and then again in the Summer Term to a Theme Park and a Water Park. These trips will take place on a Saturday. All students have been given the opportunity to attend, but attendance will be linked to students being able to demonstrate their ability to make good choices whilst in school. These trips are in addition to the Year 11 Leavers Ball which is scheduled to take place in early June.

Much to focus on and lots to look forward to!

I would like to wish you all a restful Half term break.

We are lucky to have extra support within the year 10 Pastoral team and welcome Mr Parker as our Assistant Head of Year and Mr Strawbridge as our Pastoral Support Officer. Communication over the next 2 years is vital to ensure that we can help ease any extra stress or pressure you are feeling. Even though it was a (very) long time ago, we remember what it was like starting GCSE's!

I want to thank the year group as they represented the school on the Humantopia day excellently. They were engaged and respectful towards the staff that came in and to the other students sharing. I am so proud of you all as I know how challenging being off timetable can be.

Please be aware that I will be sharing information about work experience with you so that you can start investigating placements over half term.

I am sure you will continue to be the BEST year group, thank you!

Enjoy your half term.

...Student for the Chop...

On 5th November 2022, Year 11 Student, Charleigh Miles will be having approximately 12 inches of her hair cut off, by Tracy at Ohana Hair in Exeter, to donate to The Little Princess Trust.

Anyone who has met Charleigh knows she has beautiful long hair which she has grown for years and loves to style in many ways depending on where she is going and what she is doing. Tracy will cut and restyle Charleigh's hair beautifully, although it will still be an emotional day saying goodbye to her long hair. It will be worth it knowing it is going to a fantastic cause.

Charleigh has displayed posters around school and showed a power point presentation, that she prepared, to each tutor group.

Through donating Charleigh's hair to The Little Princess Trust, it can be made into a real hair wig for children and young people under the age of 24 with cancer.

Each wig is individually made and contains hair from different people to produce the most natural looking and feeling wig possible. To allow The Little Princess Trust to continue providing their wigs free of charge, hair donators are asked to raise money. Donations are used to pay to produce wigs, and to help them support vital childhood cancer research. Charleigh has set up a JustGiving page to raise money to support childhood cancer research projects and pay for the production and fitting of wigs.

We alongside her family are extremely proud of Charleigh and would like to encourage people to donate to her JustGiving page. We understand the cost of living has increased and people may not be able to afford to donate very much, although any amount no matter how small is very much appreciated. Click on the logo or link to go straight to the page.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/charleigh-miles>





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Okehampton College



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Community
Links with families



Okehampton
United Charities
Funding for the Community

Okehampton Neurodiverse Support Group

A friendly group offering peer to peer support, information sharing and signposting for carers of school aged children with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or ADHD

join us in The Ockment Centre
North Street, Okehampton.
10.00-11.30am

Every 2nd Thursday of the month
13 Oct 10 Nov
8 Dec
£2 Donation

Refreshments provided.

For further information please contact
Community Links SW CIC
info@communitylinks-sw.co.uk 07808 523111



Community
Links

Okehampton
United Charities
Funding for the Community



Okehampton Mental Health Support Group



A group for adults who have any mental health issues.
Their companions and carers are also very welcome.

A friendly group offering peer to peer support

Meets fortnightly on a Wednesday 1-3pm
at the Ockment Centre,
North Street, Okehampton

Please call to book your space. £2 donation

For further information and to join please contact
Community Links SW CIC
familysupport@communitylinks-sw.co.uk 07933663796



Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

...everyone in our Trust.

