

Parent, Carer and Community Briefing

Thursday 30th March 2023



Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

...everyone in our Trust.



When reflecting on the past two terms at Okehampton College, it is truly outstanding to see how far, as a school community, we have come in a very short period of time. For this, I am exceptionally grateful to every single member of our community for their **HARD WORK** and **RESILIENCE**. There have been so many challenges that collectively we have had to show great **TOLERANCE** to overcome and remain focused on our goal of making Okehampton College the flagship school it can be across the whole of Devon and Southwest. There is still a lot of work to do, so we can't in any way stop or slow down, however we must all use the Easter holidays to rest, recuperate, take time with friends and family, to then return next term ready to go again.

One of our key themes this half term has been **KINDNESS**. I spoke to all year groups last week about the power of **KINDNESS** and that a simple act of **KINDNESS** that might only take 10 seconds can have a positive impact on somebody for life. A **COMMITMENT** to this from everyone in our school is easy and will make the experience for all a better one.

WORK HARD and develop **INDEPENDENCE** has been expected of every student and member of staff at Okehampton College this year, to ensure we are true to our mission of 'making every lesson count'. As I sit writing this piece, I know how hard so many have and are working and this is testament to the ambition and **COMMITMENT** by all to what we are all trying to achieve, along with the professional **RESPECT** we have for each other.

RESPONSIBILITY I feel encapsulates the school year to date, as everyone in our community; students, parents, careers, governors and staff, come together and unite in our common goal of challenging every student to exceed against their potential in school and outside of school, whilst also supporting every student through the journey that we all now is not an easy one.



We have much still to do, but it has been an honor to work with so many amazing people (younger and older) in Okehampton over the past seven months and I look forward to continuing this work into next term and beyond.

As part of our continuing improvement I would like to invite you to complete a Parent Voice Survey by [clicking here](#).

I wish you all a restful break over the Easter holidays and we look forward to welcoming students back to school on Monday 17th April. As always, if you have any questions or feedback, please get in touch.

Mr Andrew Sweeney
Principal

YOUTH CULTURE CHAMPIONS

Our Youth Culture Champions attended their last workshop this week. They continued to share stories, artefacts and food about their heritage and culture and to ask questions of each other. They have really developed knowledge about each other and about their experiences in terms of racist language and behaviour. There has been a real sense of pride in themselves and in celebrating each other's diversity.

Their next challenge is to discuss how they can bring their training back in to the college in order to start changing the culture of the school and to start challenging racism and educating everybody in our college. See over for some pictures from this session.



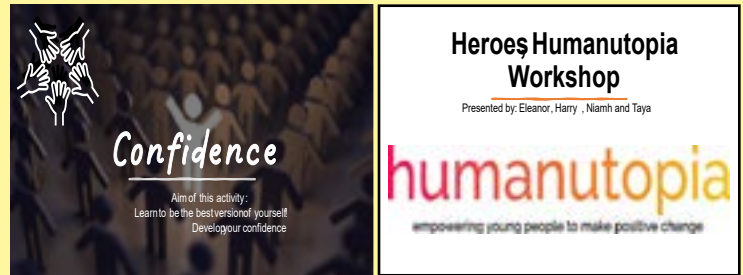
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YOUTH CULTURE CHAMPIONS



YEAR 9 HEROS

The Year 9 Heroes have been working hard this half term to create a session based around identity, self-confidence and resilience which they will be delivering to all Year 7 students after Easter. They will also be mentoring a new group of Year 7 students on a 1-1 basis. Our Year 9 Heroes will act as role models for our future Year 9 Heroes next academic year, where we plan to continue our Humanutopia workshops.



PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS WORKSHOP

We recently held our third Protected Characteristic Group workshop at Tavistock College. We took 12 students from Okehampton College to work collaboratively with students from Tavistock College, around the topic of Race and Culture. The students discussed the issues that both schools face and what needs to be done to address them. Each group created a presentation and resources to use back in our schools. Next term we will be holding two more workshops discussing Disability and Religion and Faith.



YEAR 7 TRANSITION LEADERS BOOK CLUB



Our Year 7 Transition Leaders delivered the Book Club sessions at North Tawton and South Tawton Primary Schools after a successful first visit to Okehampton Primary School. They led educational discussions about a piece of text from a Percy Jackson book with Year 6 students, each taking on the different roles of summariser, questioner, predictor and clarifier. After Easter we hope to visit Chagford Primary School.

STUDENT COUNCIL VOICE WORK

Much work has been done around Student Voice and opportunities for students to tell us what they feel has improved at the college and what can be done next to ensure we make further improvements.

Next term will see us develop our Year Student Councils and the cycle of all student voice through these councils. This voice will start in tutor groups, be fed through the Year Councils and then taken to the Senior Leadership Team to discuss and feed into the whole school strategy and planning. To tie up this cycle of voice work, Tutor groups will be fed back the progress and outcome of their views. The aim of this work is for students to feel heard and feel part of whole school improvement.

Student voice is our commitment to listening to the views, wishes and experiences of all of our young people and in making Okehampton College a better place.

