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Headteacher: Chris Eccles

Friday 26th November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We are now deep into the winter term and there has been a lot happening at Oakwood High School, much of which has given us a great sense of normality, despite the ongoing challenges the pandemic still brings to us all.

Just before half-term it was so good to invite you into school for the first time in two years for the Tutor Review Day. This is an important opportunity for tutors, pupils and their parents/carers to discuss progress and set meaningful targets for the next term. The attendance was excellent and we thank you for engaging with us. We have also hosted two other parent and pupil events. Our Post 16 evening was very well attended. It was lovely to have people in the building, to feel the buzz of pupils and their families in the marketplace engaging with over 40 post-16 providers, talking about the options and next steps beyond Y11. At the end of the event many of our exhibitors commented on how polite and interested our pupils were. We also hosted our Year 11 GCSE Presentation evening. It was wonderful to see our former pupils and hear about what they are doing now. Our special guests were former pupil Joe O'Brien, and now lead guitarist with The Reytons, and Jonathan Jones. They both spoke passionately about the positive impact being part of the Oakwood family has had on them. Joe also gave a strong message to the pupils about following their dreams and never giving up and that even when one door closes, new opportunities will present themselves.

One of the great strengths of Oakwood is how we have traditions that are both respected and looked forward to by staff and pupils. From the half-term House challenges to World Book Day, these are aspects of our school calendar that we all embrace. At this time of year, it is our focus of Remembrance, giving our pupils the opportunity to reflect and understand the sacrifice people have made for the freedoms we have today. It is crucial that we all take time to reflect, not only on the sacrifice of many people across the world throughout history who gave us our freedom, but also, how we help the next generation avoid the mistakes of the past. During the week we held assemblies and on the 11th November the whole school observed an impeccable two minutes silence.

Our attendance team, in spite of the pandemic, work tirelessly to ensure our pupils have good attendance. This half-term attendance has been 95% despite COVID and some pupils having to isolate. This half-term they have organised the flu vaccination programme for all pupils and a third COVID vaccination session was run due to demand from parents. Both these help pupils remain in school over the winter months. Since our return in November, we have averaged only two positive pupil COVID cases and no staff. This is very encouraging and a sign that the high uptake of the vaccine, as a result of your support, is having an impact.

Our Year 10 pupils have also been preparing for work placements over the last few weeks. In the week commencing 24th January 2022, following their ILEs, all our Year 10 pupils will experience the world of work. In preparation for this, they have had the opportunity to have an interview with representatives from the world of work. This has been a great experience for them and one they have fully embraced.

We have high expectations of pupils at Oakwood and we expect pupils to take responsibility in meeting these. The vast majority of our pupils wear their uniform with pride, but as we move into the colder months it is worth remembering that blazers should be worn at all times in the building, unless pupils are in class. Only the grey Oakwood V-neck jumper can be worn in addition and, as has always been the case, **all outside coats, hoodies and sweatshirts should be removed when inside**. Pupils should **not have their mobile phones out** at any time during the school day. If for any reason they need to access it, they should ask a member of staff. If a phone is seen by a member of staff, the pupil will be asked to hand it over and the pupil can collect it from reception at the end of the school day. If a pupil has to hand their phone over on two or more occasions, in a half-term, parents will be asked to collect it.

We now live in a time where social media is a major source of communication and entertainment. There are many benefits of this but there are also significant drawbacks. In recent months there have been several incidents of Tiktok crazes nationally, using school names, photographs from websites and even teachers' identities. These have been directed in often an inappropriate and offensive manner towards the school or members of staff. Although schools are working closely with Tiktok and the Professional Online Safety Helpline (POSH), can I ask that parents be vigilant and mindful of what their children are doing and posting online and if you need further information please follow the link to [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

There are now only three weeks until the end of term. As we try to restore a degree of normality to school life, there are plenty of things to look forward to. On Tuesday 14th December, pupils and staff will have the opportunity to take part in the festive lunch. For only £2.30 our catering team will be serving a selection of roast turkey, halal chicken or a quorn fillet, served with traditional trimmings and followed by either Christmas or chocolate pudding. In addition, we have our school production of the Addams Family running at 6pm on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th December, there are limited tickets available and these can be purchased from reception for £7 (£3 concession).

Finally, the last day of term is Friday 17th December. This will be a non uniform day, the theme is festive celebrations. For a £1 donation to charity, pupils can come in their own choice of clothing or even choose to dress up in traditional celebratory or festive themed clothing. There will be a slightly earlier finish, with Year 7, 9 and 10 pupils leaving after their break at 12.00pm and Years 8 and 11 at 12.20pm.

I would like to end by saying a big thank you for all the support you have given this term. The partnership between school, pupils and parents is essential to ensure, especially in recent times, that young people are not only given the very best opportunity to learn, but that they feel safe, happy and supported. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a happy and enjoyable Christmas break and we look forward to a productive and successful 2022.

Yours faithfully

Chris Eccles - Headteacher

Upcoming events

Wednesday 1st December	Years 7, 9 and 10 virtual subject parents evening
Monday 6th December	Year 11 ILEs begin (2 weeks)
Friday 10th December	Carol singing at local care home
Tuesday 14th December	School Christmas Lunch
	School Production, Adams Family - Matinee for Primary Schools
Wednesday 15th December	Y9 and Y10 Festive Feast Reward
	School Production, Adams Family
Thursday 16th December	Schools Production, Adams Family
Friday 17th December	Non Uniform day for charity
	End of term, pupils dismissed from 12.00pm
Monday 3rd January 2022	School closed - Bank Holiday (New Year)
Tuesday 4th January 2022	School closed - Bank Holiday (extra day for Queen's Jubilee)

Wednesday 5th January 2022

Monday 10th January 2022

Monday 24th January 2022

Start of the Spring Term

Year 10 ILEs start (all week)

Year 10 Work Placement week

If you need some help with a translation of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Ak potrebujete pomoc s prekladom, kludne mi napíšte email a ja vám zavolám pri prvej vhodnej príležitosti.

Moja emailová adresa je h.vereczy@oakwood.ac

اگر آپ کو اس خط کا اردو ترجمہ چاہیے تو براہ کرم اوپر دیئے گئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔ شکریہ s.khan@oakwood.ac