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9 February 2023

Headteacher: Chris Eccles

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of this half-term I would like to thank you for your continued support. It has once again been a busy six weeks with our Year 10s first completing their Internal Linear Exams (ILEs) and then going out on Work Experience for a week. The vast majority had a positive experience showing great responsibility and representing themselves, their families and the school admirably well.

We are just over half way through the school year and it is only 14 weeks to the first Year 10 and 11 GCSE exams, although the Btec exams and Non-examination Assessed elements are already underway. Pupils are being well-prepared in class by their teachers and, for that reason, it is imperative that pupils ensure their attendance is 100%. We, of course, have the challenge of the potential impending planned days of national industrial action by teachers in the National Education Union (NEU) on 28th February and the 15th and 16th March. We will do everything we can to ensure the impact on those taking exams is kept to a minimum and more information will be shared with you after the half-term break.

In the meantime, pupils in Year 10 and Year 11, should be focusing on revision at home over the coming weeks, to set the foundations for success in the summer term. In addition, they should be planning to attend after school revision sessions ([Extra Curricular Activities](#)). In addition, our Year 8s, who have their ILEs starting on Monday 27th February, should be focusing on their revision. [Y8 Revision Booklet](#)

Food Offer

Over the last term, our school council has been working closely with our catering provider, ABM, to provide food that is both attractive to pupils and also meets the food standards laid down by the Government, however, during these times of rising prices, it is a challenge. The early feedback from pupils is positive and we will continue to work with our contractors to ensure our pupils are getting good value for money. The School Council has regularly met the caterers to discuss the menu and the views of the pupil body. It has been pleasing to see the maturity and interest of these committed pupils.

Uniform

The vast majority of our pupils wear their uniform with pride, however it is timely to remind you that our uniform policy has not changed and I need to reiterate that the blazer and tie are mandatory items. Every pupil is expected to wear our uniform every day. Some key pointers would be: full length black trousers and as we head into the warmer months black skirts worn **no shorter than knee length unless with thick black tights/black leggings** as this is a professional working environment. All items must be plain black with no noticeable buckles, rivets, zips, studs, logos or badges. Tracksuit type trousers or jeans **cannot be worn**. Plain black leggings may be worn only with an appropriate skirt. For shoes, we ask that pupils wear sensible, serviceable 100% black footwear (no coloured laces, metallic badges (e.g. Nike AF1) logos, stripes, soles or flashes), no platform or high heels, boots are not acceptable; no hoods and no hats! Please note that a bag is an essential part of the school uniform.

A member of the Inspire Trust



Registered in England: 08775996

Please be reassured that this policy will be rigorously enforced: **Oakwood is a full and correct uniform school**. Any child not wearing the **full** school uniform will be offered a uniform to change into (***even if they arrive with a note***), and will be expected to wear that uniform; we do not want to have to send children home to change. All staff will check the pupils' uniform at tutor-time, first thing in the morning, and appropriate action will be taken, where necessary. Please contact the school as soon as is practical if there are any issues regarding your child's uniform – we will do all we can to support families in ensuring that children have the correct uniform and will endeavour to resolve any issues with uniform. Uniform items are always available online and in the shops; including Pinders and Johnny D's. All pupils will be expected to take off their outside coats/jumper/ hoodies once inside the building. They will need to carry those coats in a school bag.

To ensure that we meet Health and Safety regulations, it is also important that pupils bring the correct PE uniform. Meeting safety regulations includes the removal of jewellery piercings that could catch or snag, tying up long hair and ensuring headscarves are not loose, but are tight and tucked in (safe sporting head coverings can be bought very cheaply on Amazon). The legislation on jewellery falls under Section 7 of the Health and Safety Act.

PE hoodies are only to be worn in PE and not around school.

Free School Meals and Uniform Support

These are very challenging times economically and I know many families are struggling to make ends meet. If you think you may be eligible for your child to receive free school meals, please follow the link below to the local authority application form. Once this is completed, your child will receive a daily allowance of £2.40 on their catering account, which they can access using their thumb print on the cashless payment system. This amount covers the daily meal deal, which includes a main course and desert. [RMBC Free School Meal Application Form](#)

In addition, if you require support with uniform please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of House who will be more than willing to provide you with help.

Selling Items in School

Recently, there have been a number of incidents when pupils have brought in multiple items e.g. sweets, energy drinks, with the sole intention of selling them. It states clearly in the school's 'Positive Behaviour Policy' that under government guidance 'Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies (2022). School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search'. In this instance, the items will only be returned if a parent or carer comes into school to collect them. Additionally, any pupils found with multiple items (clearly not for personal use) that have been brought into school with the intent to sell, will receive a sanction. The items available to buy also contradict the government's health food guidelines. I would urge parents to support us in reducing incidents of this nature by being vigilant at home and inquisitive if your child is in possession of larger than normal quantities of drinks, confectionery or even money.

How to Talk to Your Child about Andrew Tate

It's been a rollercoaster year on social media for Andrew Tate. His notoriety snowballed after teenagers started spotting videos of him, some promoting misogyny and targeting women, all over their social media feeds back in the summer.

So, if you think your child might have been drawn in by videos like this on their social media feeds, what can you do?

Experts in child welfare say the most important thing is that parents talk to their children about what's being served up to them online - and to ask about influencers like Tate. Discuss how the algorithm

works, and its tendency to recommend emotive and reactive content. Just because a video is being pushed to your feed by automated systems on social media doesn't mean you have to agree with or even like what you're seeing.

Encourage them to question everything they're seeing online, and where it's come from - especially when it feels like it's deliberately being pushed to them. At Oakwood we work hard to promote and develop the value of respect in order to create a safe environment where everyone feels valued and welcome. If you have any concerns regarding this issue please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of House.

Attendance Matters

Attending school is an important part in a child's development and allows them to make progress across a breadth of subjects. Our whole school attendance figure for the academic year so far, is currently better than the national average for schools across the country. I would like to thank you, not only for making sure that your child attends school, but also keeping the attendance team informed when your child cannot attend on a given day. At this time of year, lots of families look to book their summer holidays for 2023. Please remember that the school will not authorise holidays in term time and that absence of this kind will affect your child's learning and their final attendance total.

Parents Evening

In the next term we hold the last Parents Evenings for the academic year. Y7, 9 & 10 have appointments in the building from 4-7pm on Tuesday 7th March, with Y8 & 11 on Thursday 23rd March. If you have not had the chance to make appointments, please use the following link

<https://oakwoodhighschool.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

Please contact the school, c.bamforth@oakwood.ac if you need help with this.

Safe Parking

A reminder that the front of school is extremely busy with potentially 1,070 pupils leaving the site at 3.10pm. If you collect your child by car, a reminder that there should be no cars parked on the zig-zags, pavements or double yellow lines. The lighter evenings are starting to be seen now we are in the month of February. Perhaps arranging to meet your child a short distance away from the zebra crossing can be considered. Note also that, from time to time, traffic enforcement officers frequent this location.

Community Sport Development

In early December work started on the construction of a full-size multi-sports all-weather pitch. Despite delays, due to the weather and challenges with drainage, the project is on track to be completed in April. This will not only provide Oakwood pupils with another first-class sporting facility for learning, but also allow us to start to open up this and our other excellent facilities to our community. We are very excited about developing these opportunities both for our pupils and the wider Oakwood community - further details will be shared in the coming months.

Summer exam timetable

When we return after the half term break there will be only 10 weeks until the first full GCSE exam on the 15th May, with speaking exams in Spanish and French commencing at the start of May. To help pupils and parents plan ahead, please follow the link to the timetable below. It is vital that pupils attend all their exams, as the grade they receive will be awarded across all assessments they do. Our pupils have been working hard with our staff up to this point and we are sure with a final push, hard work and revision, they will do well in the summer.

Summer Exam Timetable

Finally, can I once again thank you for your ongoing support, positive home school relationships are important to ensure pupils make good progress and succeed.

Yours faithfully

Chris Eccles - Headteacher

Upcoming Events

Friday 10th February	Trust Inset Day, school closed to pupils
Monday 20th February	Start of Half Term
Monday 27th February	School return 8.30am
Tuesday 7th March 4-7pm	Y8 ILEs (1 week)
Thursday 23rd March 4-7pm	Y7, 9, 10 Parents Evening
Monday 2nd April	Y8 & 11 Parents Evening
Monday 17th April	Start of Easter Holiday
Monday 1st May	School return 8.30am
Tuesday 2nd May	Bank holiday
Monday 8th May	Start of GCSE speaking exams
Monday 15th May	Additional bank holiday for the King's Coronation
	All GCSE exams start

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

Ak potrebujete pomoc s prekladom, kľudne mi napíšte email a ja vám zavolám pri prvej vhodnej príležitosti. Moja emailová adresa je info@oakwood.ac

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