



WELCOME TO THE INFORMATION NEWSLETTER MARCH 2024

Our OCA Vision.

We will make the biggest difference to the lives of our students by laying down the foundations to encourage a successful future.

WELCOME TO THE SPRING EDITION OF THE PARENTAL NEWSLETTER

On the 28th February, we were deeply saddened to receive the news of the passing of our much-loved student, Tom Mahoney. The OCA community will always remember Tom extremely fondly. He was a kind and very well-liked student, who always put others first and was passionate about fundraising with his friends. He was also an integral part of our award-winning student social action team, which helped to create a memorial garden for fellow student and friend, Alfie Humphreys. We have set up a place of remembrance outside our school for Tom and members of our community have come and paid their respects. In addition to remembering Tom in our memorial garden, his friends and the school community have begun to plan and create a contemplative memorial space in Tom's memory. Our deepest condolences remain with his family and loved ones.





We want all of our students to feel part of our family and understand what it means to be a 'true OCAer'. We do this through our core values of: Originality, Community, Aspiration, Excellence and Respect. In addition, our school culture is the collective beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviours that shape our school. Part of our culture is having some non-negotiables which our students understand happen as part of their daily routine; a copy is below in order to refamiliarise yourselves.

OCAER Culture

Arrive to lessons on time and line up outside the classroom

Have the correct equipment

Write out the date, learning objective and complete the "Do Now"

Engage and participate in the lesson

Demonstrate resilience and be an independent learner

Use the opportunities provided to act upon feedback e.g green pen, questioning etc

Embrace the OCAER values and have a love for learning

Reflect on your learning in preparation for the next lesson

OCA CHALLENGES

Our OCA challenges continue to motivate and reward students. This weekly challenge focuses on our top school priorities of attending school and being punctual, alongside encouraging a positive learning environment through achieving grades 1 and 2 for attitudes to learning, learning multiple Epraise points and refraining from receiving any behaviour points. This weekly challenge is competitive amongst each form within their year group; the top 3 forms earn points and rewards! The form at the top of the leader board by the end of the year will receive a trip in the Summer term. Details to follow! Please encourage your child to embrace this challenge and become a successful member of their form.

WHY ATTEND SCHOOL EVERY DAY?

Good school attendance will give your child the opportunity of success and help them develop the necessary skills for future life. Your child should attend school everyday unless there is an unavoidable cause such as illness.

Missing school damages a student's learning and their grades; research shows that missing 17 days (4 weeks) of school often leads to a drop of one full grade at GCSE, this can equate to 20 hours of English, 20 hours of Maths and 20 hours of Science missed. Absence also disrupts routines and can make a student vulnerable to crime.

WHY BE PUNCTUAL TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY?

School starts at 8.30am every day; students who are late are missing out on vital education that is covered in Morning Enrichment. Being on time sets students up for a positive start to the day and gives them the opportunity to discuss any concerns with their form tutor. Any student who arrives after 9am will be given a U code. This late code is classed as an unauthorised absence and could result in a fixed penalty notice.

Remember, when students leave school we are often asked for references. The two main enquiries of employers and course providers are punctuality and attendance; not only will absences and lateness impact on grades and education, it could also impact on future education or job opportunities.



YEAR 11 GCSE EXAMINATIONS

Year 11s – please see below for the GCSE timetable. When we return after Easter, Year 11 students will be given their individual examination timetables. Please turn over for the practical GCSE examination times.

DATE	MORNING	AFTERNOON
THURSDAY 2 ND MAY		DIGITAL INFO TECHNOLOGY
FRIDAY 3 RD MAY	ANIMAL CARE	
WEDNESDAY 8 TH MAY	HAIR & BEAUTY	
THURSDAY 9 TH MAY	RE (PAPER 1) BTEC SPORT	DRAMA
FRIDAY 10 TH MAY	BIOLOGY (PAPER 1)	CHILD DEVELOPMENT
MONDAY 13 TH MAY	ENGLISH LITERATURE (PAPER 1)	
TUESDAY 14 TH MAY		BUSINESS (PAPER 1)
WEDNESDAY 15 TH MAY	HISTORY (PAPER 1)	COMPUTER SCIENCE (PAPER 1)
THURSDAY 16 TH MAY	MATHS (PAPER 1)	RE (PAPER 2)
FRIDAY 17 TH MAY	CHEMISTRY (PAPER 1)	GEOGRAPHY (PAPER 1)
MONDAY 20 TH MAY	ENGLISH LITERATURE (PAPER 2)	
TUESDAY 21 ST MAY		ENGINEERING & COMPUTER SCIENCE (PAPER 2)
WEDNESDAY 22 ND MAY	PHYSICS (PAPER 1)	PE (PAPER 1)
THURSDAY 23 RD MAY	ENGLISH LANGUAGE (PAPER 1)	
FRIDAY 24 TH MAY		
HALF TERM		
MONDAY 3 RD JUNE	MATHS (PAPER 2)	PE (PAPER 2)
TUESDAY 4 TH JUNE	SPANISH (LISTENING & READING)	HISTORY (PAPER 2)
WEDNESDAY 5 TH JUNE	GEOGRAPHY (PAPER 2)	BUSINESS (PAPER 2) STATISTICS (PAPER 1)
THURSDAY 6 TH JUNE	ENGLISH LANGUAGE (PAPER 2)	
FRIDAY 7 TH JUNE	BIOLOGY (PAPER 2)	
MONDAY 10 TH JUNE	MATHS (PAPER 3)	SPANISH (WRITING)
TUESDAY 11 TH JUNE	CHEMISTRY (PAPER 2)	HISTORY (PAPER 3) FURTHER MATHS (PAPER 1)
WEDNESDAY 12 TH JUNE		
THURSDAY 13 TH JUNE		
FRIDAY 14 TH JUNE	GEOGRAPHY (PAPER 3)	PHYSICS (PAPER 2)
MONDAY 17 TH JUNE	STATISTICS (PAPER 2)	
TUESDAY 18 TH JUNE	MUSIC	
WEDNESDAY 19 TH JUNE	FURTHER MATHS (PAPER 2)	
THURSDAY 20 TH JUNE	HOSPITALITY & CATERING	



ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS

DATE	SUBJECT	TIME
TUESDAY 16 th APRIL	ART	ALL DAY
WEDNESDAY 17 th APRIL	TEXTILES	ALL DAY
FRIDAY 19 th APRIL	BTEC DANCE	ALL DAY
WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY 22 nd APRIL	SPANISH SPEAKING TESTS	INDIVIDUAL TIMES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED

YEAR 11 GCSE PREPARATION

During the Easter holidays, staff will be holding additional revision sessions which will be tailored to meet specific needs as a result of the mock examination analysis. As well as enhancing your study skills and boost motivation, these sessions will help consolidate knowledge and improve your exam performance. They will also help build confidence and reduce stress.

In addition to the Easter school sessions, our intervention programme will begin when we return after Easter. Last year, we trialled Revision Breakfasts with our Year 11 on the morning of the exams. These proved very popular and successful and as a result we are excited to be hosting them again this year! More details to follow!

YEAR 11 EASTER SCHOOL TIMETABLE

DATE	SUBJECT	TIME	ROOM
SATURDAY 30 th MARCH	SPANISH	9AM – 11AM	H19
TUESDAY 2 nd APRIL	ENGLISH	9AM – 11AM	N BLOCK
	ANIMAL CARE	9AM-11AM	S8
	DANCE	12PM – 3PM	C3
WEDNESDAY 3 rd APRIL	GRAPHICS & 3D DESIGN	9AM - 2PM	C6
	DRAMA	12 NOON – 3PM	S10
	BUSINESS STUDIES	12 NOON – 3PM	N3
THURSDAY 4 th APRIL	HOSPITALITY & CATERING	9AM – 2PM	N8
	GCSE PE	9AM – 11AM	N2
MONDAY 8 th APRIL	ART & TEXTILES	10AM – 3PM	H22
TUESDAY 9 th APRIL	ENGINEERING	9AM – 2PM	C7
	ART	10AM – 3PM	H23
	BTEC PE & GCSE PE	9AM – 11AM	S10, S11 & N2
WEDNESDAY 10 th APRIL	COMPUTER SCIENCE	9AM – 11AM	S19



IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE REST OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Students return - Monday 15th April 2024
Y10 Progress Evening - Thursday 18th April
Y7 Outdoor Adventurous Activity – Monday 22nd April & Monday 29th April
Staff v Student Rounders after school - 23rd April
Year 8 Vaccinations – details to follow - 25th April
Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition - 1st, 2nd May and 3rd May
GCSE Examinations begin - 2nd May
Bank Holiday - 6th May
Y8 Progress Evening - Thursday 9th May
Year 8 Vaccinations – details to follow - 21st May
Break up for half term – 24th May
Return to school – 3rd June
Y9 Work Experience week beginning – 17th June
Y7 Progress Evening - 20th June
Year 11 Prom - 21st June
Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition - 20th and 21st June

Whole School Assessment Week 24th June - 28th June

Y6 Transition Days – 1st and 2nd July
Y10 Geography Fieldwork Trips - Wednesday 3rd July, Friday 5th July, Monday 8th July and Tuesday 9th July
OAT Sport Cup – 4th July
Y10 Cronton College Taster Day -10th July
Sports Day - 12th July
OCAER Week – 15th to 18th July
School finishes for summer 19th July 12.15pm

WHOLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT WEEK 24TH JUNE TO 28TH JUNE

The next whole school assessment window will run slightly different from the first and second assessment weeks. In the summer term, like previous years, Years 7-10 will have a week of assessments beginning 24th June.
 A timetable of your child's assessments will be sent home, alongside their Summer revision mats informing you of the topics covered this next term. The assessments they complete are cumulative, so you will need to refer to the Autumn and Spring term revision mats (topics) also.
 We have listened to your feedback and alongside the revision mats on the school website, knowledge organisers for each subject, are also available.
 All materials can be found under curriculum and assessment.

IMPORTANT STANDARDS LETTER

Please see the attached letter outlining our standards & expectations.



LITERACY



Every February, to celebrate St Valentine, Mrs Pericaval runs a book review competition in the library called Blind Date a Book . Students unwrap books, take them home, read them and write a review. At the beginning of March, we drew the Blind Date a Book competition winner and it's Kate K in Year 8! Here she is with her prize, a £50 Amazon voucher! Well done Kate!

YEARS 8 & 9 BOOKS FOR BREAKFAST



We had a fabulous morning in the canteen at our Year 8 and 9 Books for Breakfast event at the start of February. Thank you to all our parents, carers, grandparents, siblings and of course our students who came to have breakfast together and read! It is always a pleasure to host such events! See you next term for more books for breakfast!

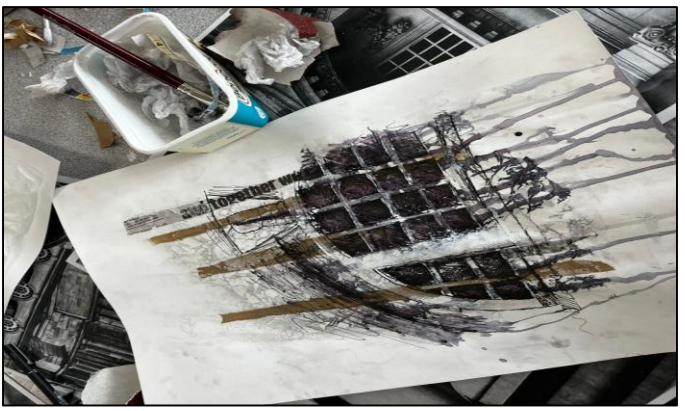
YEAR 10 READING LEADERS

We have a team of Year 10 reading leaders who provide reading support with our Year 7 students each Friday in the library. This role involves supporting the younger students with their reading and acting as role models to our younger students. In addition, this allows our Year 10 to add this to their volunteering section for The Duke of Edinburgh Award. On the last session of this term, all those involved, both Year 10 and Year 7, were rewarded with a chocolate egg to say thank you for their dedication and hard work. The scheme is in its fifth year and continues to be a success!

TRIPS, VISITS AND THE COMMUNITY

In March, our Year 10 GCSE art students were treated to a wonderful workshop with artist Ian Murphy; our students are familiar with his work as they study him for their architecture scheme!
 He brought in lots of pieces of his own work and demonstrated the use of different backgrounds and media.
 Everyone had a fantastic day!

IAN MURPHY
Artist





TRIPS, VISITS AND THE COMMUNITY

ATHLETES FOR SCHOOLS



Athletes in Schools are the UK's leading provider of inspirational Olympic/Paralympic athlete schools visits. In January, Years 9 and 10 were treated to inspirational and motivational sessions from two of the athletes, Ayaz Bhuta and Reynold Bangino as well as team building sessions.

Ayaz is an ex-GB athlete for wheelchair rugby and he won Gold in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. Reynold became British Champion when winning the long jump at the 2020 British Athletics Championships with a jump of 7.81m!





TRIPS, VISITS AND THE COMMUNITY

HALTON CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

In January, six very talented students from Year 8 took part in one of three art workshops earlier this week with Sam and Tim from Halton Cancer Support Group, in order to raise awareness of different signs and symptoms of cancer. We can't wait to see the finished art work in our community!



A CHRISTMAS CAROL PERFORMANCE

In January, just as we returned after the Christmas break, our school hall was transformed into a Dickensian world and our Year 10 were treated to a fantastic performance of A Christmas Carol from Quantum Theatre! What a fabulous start to the new year! Well done, Year 10, for being a stunning and receptive audience!

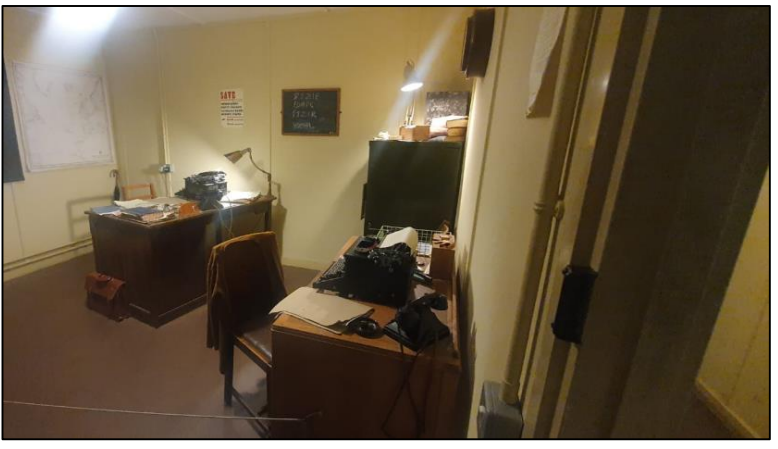




TRIPS, VISITS AND THE COMMUNITY

BLETCHLEY PARK

At the start of February, our Year 10 Computer Science students visited Bletchley Park, the former wartime headquarters of the allied codebreakers during the Second World War. All our students thoroughly enjoyed the trip: "It was brilliant. Really interactive, informative and relevant to our course. We loved it." Miss Lyne who organised the trip said the pupils were outstanding!



BLETCHLEY PARK



TRIPS, VISITS AND THE COMMUNITY

CAREERS IN SPORT AT LANCASHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB



In January, some of our Year 9 & 10 students are at a Careers in Sport LIVE event at Lancashire CCC. What a brilliant opportunity to see first-hand the diverse roles and responsibilities of working within a professional sports club and its foundation!



In February, Year 11 students went to Hope Academy for a study skills course, run by the University of Cambridge. The students took part in study skills & critical thinking workshops. Everyone had a great morning and were certainly given lots to think about!

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE STUDY SKILLS





AWARDS & SUCCESSES

OAT AWARDS WINNER!



Many congratulations to Miss Bagshaw who is the winner of the OAT Enrichment Champion Award for her outstanding contributions to the enrichment of our students' lives; well done Miss Bagshaw!

**OAT SPELLING BEE
EFEMENA IS THOUGH TO THE FINAL!**



On Thursday 29th February, Efemena in year 7, competed in the Spanish Spelling Bee regional semi-finals at Ormiston SWB Academy in Bilston. And guess what? She then qualified for the National final and has now got through to the final! At the end of April she will be competing against other finalists at Cambridge University and the winning prize is a trip to Spain for her and her family. This is a huge achievement for Efemena who has been working very hard since September, staying behind after school and using her break and lunch times to practise. ¡Buena suerte Efemena!



AWARDS & SUCCESSES

THEO L IN YEAR 10 – BOXING SUCCESS!



After Theo L in Year 10 became the Merseyside and Cheshire Regional Boxing Champion, he went on to win the Midlands Championships last weekend with a unanimous vote! He's now only one fight away from winning the National Championships. Well done Theo!

SOCIAL ACTION AND THE COMMUNITY

HALTON BIG FOREST

Since October 2023, our Youth Social Action Group, lead by Mrs Molyneux, have been clearing the OCA grounds and planting bulbs and hedgerows around Alfie's hut, in preparation for The Big Halton Forest. This initiative is part of delivering a green recovery after the pandemic in conjunction with Halton Borough Council and tackling the climate emergency by planting trees and enhancing the green infrastructure of Runcorn and Widnes. The goals are to plant 130,000 trees, one for every person across Halton and restore or expand greenspaces for the benefit of communities and wildlife, while inspiring a passion for trees, woods & waterfronts

OCA are the first school in Halton to take part in The Big Halton Forest.

Well done to all those who took part and a special thank you to Mrs Molyneux and Mr Davenport.

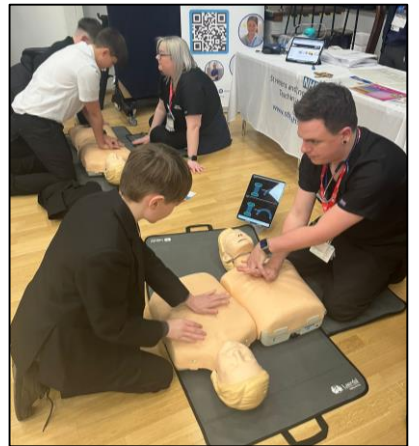
In addition, a huge congratulations to Mrs Molyneux and her group as they have got through to the finals of The Goldsmiths' Award for community Engagement which means OCA was in the top eight of applications. The National Final will be at Goldsmith's Hall , London on 25th June!

Good luck everyone!





EMPLOYERS' FAIR



Our Employer's Fair took place in January and there were numerous businesses, local & national employers, as well as apprenticeship providers and colleges in attendance to give advice and support to all our students. Thank you to Miss Davies for arranging the fabulous day!

