



### A message from Mrs Jackson, Deputy Headteacher

Welcome back to all our students, we hope you all had a restful and relaxing break. It has been great to see our students back in school ready to learn and wearing their uniform with pride this week. As we settle back into the school routines there is a lot to look forward to this half term. Year 11 are getting ready for their second series of Mock exams and we invite parents of year 11 to bring the students to our Supporting Success Evening on 30th January where we will share key information on the exam season and how families can support. The teachers continue to offer revision and coursework catch up sessions for a number of subjects as well, details of these will be sent home. Next week key stage 3 students will also be completing assessments in lessons and the results of these will be reported home later this half term. We are also looking forward to our Spring Showcase on Wednesday evening which will be a chance to come and see our talented musicians, we look forward to seeing you there.

### Attendance & Standards reminder from Mr Pollok

Attendance to school is vital for our every child's future success. Missed learning causes gaps in learning and could cause your child to fall behind. We want every child to be present everyday and contributing to our vibrant school community, your role in this is vital. Please ensure that whenever possible any appointments, including medical, are booked outside of school hours. If this is not possible students are expected to attend school before and/or after the appointment.

Lateness to school, as explained in a letter sent home earlier this week and in assemblies to students, the school day starts at 8.40am. This is the time that students should be at their tutor room or lined up ready for assembly, therefore the gates will be closed at 8.35am. If a student arrives after 8.40am they will remain in the lecture hall for the whole of tutor and will receive a 15 minute break-time detention.

Please ensure that your child is conforming to our school policies, especially regarding shoes not trainers, single stud earrings and no mobile phones/headphones. A reminder that fake/acrylic nails are not allowed in school. The pastoral team have identified and contacted you regarding this and that nails need to be removed by Monday.

#### WHY SO IMPORTANT?

In many walks of life achieving 85-90% in something would be a success, but when it comes to attendance, 90% means on average a student has a day off every fortnight and misses 19 days in total each year.

In the world of education, missing that much learning does cause students to fall behind their peers. We want students in school every day they can, to belong to our community and make the most of every learning opportunity. We also want to teach them resilient behaviours they'll need for adult life.

#### MAKE SURE YOU:

- ✓ Avoid absence where possible
- ✓ Request known absence in advance
- ✓ Always report an absence
- ✓ Communicate any concerns
- ✓ Encourage good attendance
- ✓ Send them in to try if in doubt

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Good attendance means being in school at least **97% of the time.**

Attendance:	Your child loses:	Which equals:
100%	0 days of learning	0 lessons missed
99%	1 day of learning	6 lessons missed
98%	3 days of learning	18 lessons missed
97%	1 week of learning	30 lessons missed
96%	1.5 weeks of learning	45 lessons missed
94%	2 weeks of learning	60 lessons missed
93%	2.5 weeks of learning	75 lessons missed
92%	3 weeks of learning	90 lessons missed
90%	3.5 weeks of learning	105 lessons missed

**Attendance under 90%**

has a proven and drastic effect on student performance.

**NOT SURE? JUST ASK! CONTACT US ON:**



absence@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk



01225 792700

### Applications to Sixth Form

There is still time to apply to our Sixth form. Please visit our website or email [sixthformadmin@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:sixthformadmin@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk) for course information.

**To Apply for Sixth Form courses by 31st January:**

Current year 11 students have received an email invitation to their school email address (please check your junk email folder if you can't find it) with a link to follow to our application form or go to: <http://melkshamoak.applicaa.com/year12>



### Spring Showcase

Book tickets now for our Spring Showcase.

During the evening students from Year 7 to 12 will be performing a real mixture of styles of music.

We have experienced performers appearing again and some who are braving the stage for the first time which is amazing.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and there will be an interval for refreshments.

Tickets are available in the music department or on the door on the evening.



### PE Enrichment Term 3

Terms 3 Enrichment				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3.10pm – 4.10pm				
<b>Multi-skills Club</b> (invite only) CWI	<b>Boys Fitness Club</b> Year 7-10 Sign up with HWA & WHA  <b>Girls Bench ball &amp; Dodgeball Club</b> RSA EPR	<b>Netball year 7</b> girls RSA/EPR  <b>Netball Year 8</b> girls CWI  <b>Football Year 7</b> NBA  <b>Football Year 8</b> HWA  <b>Football Year 9 &amp; 10</b> WHA	<b>Badminton</b> WHA CCO RSA  <b>Football Analysis</b> Year 7 boys NBA	



## Melksham Town Council is launching a Youth Advisory Board

We're excited to let you know about a fantastic opportunity for your students! Melksham Town Council is launching a Youth Advisory Board, giving young people a real voice in shaping the future of our community. To kick things off, we're hosting the Next Gen Gig, a fun-filled evening designed to engage and inspire local youth. It's being held to launch the Youth Advisory Board, an exciting opportunity for students interested in local government. They can register for the board and attend the event to learn more.

The event will feature two local bands, The Sunnies and Between the Lines, both active on Instagram and Facebook for students to look up.

Pizza will be provided!

They can buy tickets through the QR Code on the poster or here:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/melksham-assembly-hall/next-gen-gig/e-eyvxb>

The event will take place in a secure assembly hall, offering parents peace of mind even though it runs late.

THE ASSEMBLY HALL  
Melksham

# NEXT GEN GIG

FT THE SUNNIES +  
BETWEEN THE LINES

YOUTH EVENT  
14-18 YEARS OLD

19:00 - 22:00 | 15 FEBRUARY 2025 | £2.50 TICKET

MELKSHAM ASSEMBLY HALL

Melksham Town Council logo, QR code, and Youth Council logo.

<https://www.melksham-tc.gov.uk/>  
01225 704187



## SEND at Melksham Oak

Just a reminder that I will continue to have weekly 'SEND Clinic' appointments which will be a 15-minute online appointment to discuss your child and their SEND needs in school.

Book here— <https://MOCS.schoolcloud.co.uk/> - Miss H Ornov, SENCo

### Do you know who is in our SEND Team?

click this link to see our current staff and their profiles.

<https://www.melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk/about-us/school-information/send>

### SEND Coffee Morning

This is a good opportunity to meet other parents and carers of SEND Children.

**Tuesday 4th February**

**09:00– 10:00**

To book a space email-

[ornovh@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:ornovh@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)

### Can you help us?

We are looking for the below donations. If you are able to help, please drop off to reception and mark for SEND. We will be very grateful for any support you can give.

Arts and Craft materials/Sets - Fidget Toys - Puzzles - Water bottles

Gardening Equipment - Waterproofs/Wheelies - Cooking/Baking Equipment



## SEND at Melksham Oak

Please find below a list of inclusive activities running in Wiltshire during 2025, including returning clubs and brand-new sessions!

### Rising Stars & Fit Club returns!

Rising Stars and Fit Club are weekly SEND activities delivered during term time. A variety of sports/games are delivered, providing opportunities for all to remain active after school, and offering safe spaces for new friendships to be formed.

Trowbridge Rising Stars	Trowbridge Sports Centre	Wednesdays	4.15pm – 5pm	8–16-year-olds	£3.50
Salisbury Rising Stars	Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre	Wednesdays	5pm – 5.55pm	8–16-year-olds	£3.50
Salisbury Fit Club	Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre	Wednesdays	6pm – 6.55pm	Age 17+	£3.50
Chippenham Rising Stars	Sheldon School	Thursdays	5pm – 5.55pm	8–16-year-olds	£3.50

### Wiltshire Inclusive Dance

Wiltshire Inclusive Dance is returning with 2 new sessions! Clubs provide children and young people with an opportunity to explore the space and express themselves to music through movement. Clubs are delivered by qualified dance, movement therapists. All clubs have an additional 15 minutes for refreshments. **For more information contact [wiltshireinclusiveactivities@hotmail.com](mailto:wiltshireinclusiveactivities@hotmail.com)**



Melksham Oak  
Community School



Newsletter  
Friday 10th January



**ELITE TEENS KICKBOXING**



**MELKSHAM**

**Parents of teenagers...**

**We are looking for 20 teenagers who would like to try a FREE teens only kickboxing class in Melksham, beginning at the end of January 2025!**

**Sign up for your free trial using the QR code below.**





### NEST

#### Bereavement Support Programme

For school years 6 -11

A leaflet for young people & parents/carers

Grief support for children and young people in Swindon & Wiltshire

Registered Charity Number: 1159719

#### Who are Wiltshire Treehouse?

We help children and young people who have experienced the death of someone important to them.

#### What is NEST?

NEST is a group of young people and specially trained adults who come together to talk about death and dying, and the effect it has on us.

NEST is for young people in school years 6 to 11. It takes place over 6 Wednesday evenings in the Southwick area of Trowbridge.

#### Why am I coming to NEST?

You are coming to NEST because you are ready to talk about the person or people in your life who have died.

You may feel:

- Upset
- Angry
- Confused
- Alone
- GUILTY
- Low
- Numb
- Worried



You may feel one or more of these things. Or you might feel none of them.

**Whatever you feel—that is OK.**

#### Who will be there?

There will be up to 10 young people in each group.

There are adult helpers who will try to make sure you feel comfortable. They will chat with you and offer you a drink.

The other young people in the group will have experienced the death of someone important to them too.

Although everyone's experience is different it is likely that you will find one or more people in the group who you can relate to in some way. This can really help if you are feeling alone or different to your friends. Young people tell us it can be helpful to meet people who "Get it".

#### What will we talk about?

We have 5 main themes:

1. Memories
2. Feelings
3. How we cope
4. Who can help us
5. The future



As well as talking we make and do lots of things, like making memory sand jars (shown in the photo above).

We have snacks half way through the session.

#### Will I have to talk?

No, you don't have to talk. We do expect everyone to listen to each other respectfully, but if you'd rather not talk about your own experience that is ok. You may still find ways to help yourself by listening to others.

But, the more you take part the more you will gain from the group. Young people often say the hardest part is walking through the door on the first day, once you've done that it gets easier and most people make friends quickly and easily in the group.

"It was really hard coming on the first day. I was so nervous. The adult came over and showed me where I could make a name badge and asked if I wanted a drink. Once we were all sat down and got talking it got easier. By the last week we didn't want to leave. Some of us still stay in touch now." Charlie, who attended NEST

#### Will you tell my parent/carers?

At NEST we have a strict code of confidentiality. This means that we don't share our conversations with people outside of the group unless we are worried that someone is at risk of getting hurt. So we won't tell anyone—including parents, carers or school - unless we have to. If we need to do this we will always try to talk to you about this first.

#### How can I get the most from NEST?

Everyone is different but young people have told us that these things helped them get the most from the group.

##### Come every week

Meet other people who know what it's like when someone important dies

##### Try to talk to others when you can

Talk about what you've been doing at group with adults you trust, like parents, carers or school. They can help you.

**Remember that whatever you feel is ok—you can't compare yourself to others**

#### What do people say about NEST?

"I often feel very sad but I feel safe here."

"It's easier to talk to people here, it helped me open up."

"I was worried about going at first but it has been really helpful, thank you."



#### For Parents— How can I book this programme for my child?

Please visit [www.wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk](http://www.wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk) and fill out the WILTSHIRE TREEHOUSE REFERRAL FORM on our home page.

A member of our team will then be in touch to talk about what might help your child, including this programme.

If you feel like your child needs help with a bereavement, but you are not sure if this programme would be helpful, then please complete the form. A member of the team can then talk to you about what might help.

#### How else can I support my child?

- Answer questions openly and honestly
  - Reassure them it's ok to ask questions
  - Help them to remember the person who has died
  - Help them to express their feelings
  - Reassure them that their feelings are normal
  - Reassure them that it is normal to feel worried about coming to a programme like NEST, but that there will be people who can help them feel safe and that taking part can help them in the long run.
- Please get in touch if you would like further advice on supporting your child with their grief.

Made possible with funding from

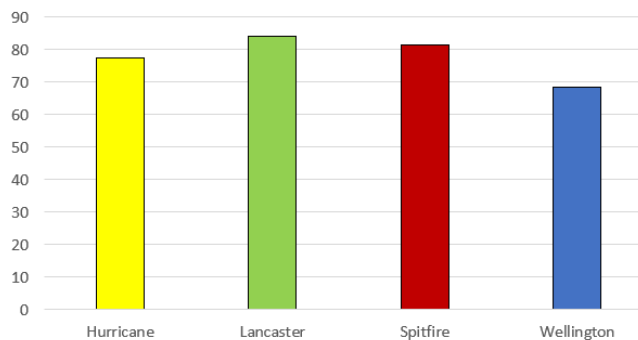




### Merits

Well done to all the students that have gained merits in the first week back. Students next week will also be able to gain extra merits through the Spirit of MOCS awards that will be handed out to students who are seen to be extra polite, helping around school and holding doors open for others.

Average Merits per Student



### Key Contacts

In the first instance please contact your child’s tutor, who will be best placed to answer your query or direct you to the best person who can give you an answer. Details of the pastoral team are below:

#### Pastoral Team

- Year 7: Mrs H. Pearce [pearceh@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:pearceh@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)
- Year 8: Mrs S. Phelps [phelpss@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:phelpss@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)
- Year 9: Mr L. Ballinger [ballingerl@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:ballingerl@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)
- Year 10: Mrs C. Hughes [hughesc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:hughesc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)
- Year 11: Mr J. Oatley [oatleyj@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:oatleyj@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)

#### KS5 Leads

- Mrs K. Jones [ionesk@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:ionesk@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)
- Mr C. Butter [butterc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:butterc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)

#### Head of Careers Education

- Ms C. Tranter [tranterc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:tranterc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk)



### Upcoming Events



- Monday 13th January - Friday 17th January:** Year 7 to 9 In-class assessments
- Wednesday 15th January:** Spring showcase
- Thursday 16th January:** Year 11 & 13 year group photos
- Thursday 23rd January:** Year 12 Parents evening (online)
- Thursday 30th January:** Year 11 students and parents supporting success event
- Monday 10th February:** Year 11 and 13 Mocks