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The Oaks Academy Newsletter February 2025

Headteachers Update



We are justifiably proud of the opportunities offered to our pupils and you will be reading about these in this edition of the Newsletter. We have a strong curricular offer and this is complemented with meaningful learning in the classroom as well as improved examination results year on year. In this edition you will read about the curriculum offer in Science as well as how we meet individual needs. Personal Development is a cornerstone of our offer and we have included some really interesting insights into our enrichment programmes and our careers offer.

With best wishes.

Peter Kingdom

Headteacher

Whole School Focus: SEND

There are four areas within Special Educational Needs (SEND):

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Physical Need
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Cognition and Learning

Pupils that have cognition and learning challenges find it difficult to acquire, process and apply knowledge and skills. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs:

- Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) - this encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia

Communication and Interaction

Pupils that have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are likely to have difficulties with social interaction.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Pupils may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which may manifest in many ways, for instance pupils may be:

- Withdrawn
- Isolated
- Challenging in terms of behaviour
- Disruptive in terms of behaviour

The list is not a complete list of how behaviours of SEMH may be displayed.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This is when a pupil has a physical need that requires additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

What does SEND look like at The Oaks Academy?

How does a pupil get identified as SEND?

There are many ways that a pupil may get identified as SEND at The Oaks Academy:

- Primary schools - when a pupil has SEND in primary school they will come across and be placed on our SEND register
- Parents - parents can contact the SEND team to highlight any concerns, then the SENDCo will gather information and carry out any assessments needed
- Teachers - teachers can refer to the SEND team any concerns. Then the SENDCo will gather information and carry out any assessments needed

What does SEND support in the classroom look like?

Inclusion Centre - this is an area where pupils can go to have a few minutes out of lesson to reset or for complete interventions (see below)

Interventions - at The Oaks Academy we run a range of interventions to support pupils. These include but are not limited to:

- Drawing and talking - emotional regulation
- Anger management
- Literacy
- Numeracy

How to help a child with SEND at home to be ready for school?

There are many ways that you can support your child's SEND:

- Reading with them regularly
- Setting up a schedule for completing homework and/or revision for upcoming tests
- Ensuring they have the equipment they need for their day eg pencil case, PE kit packed for the right day
- Routine at home during the school week eg a set bedtime to ensure they are well rested
- Communication with the SEND team, which is so important to ensure we can provide your child with the right care and are able to support them

For further information please see the links below:

[Understanding SEND - Kids](#)

<http://www.ceias.cheshireeast.gov.uk/>

What to do if you are concerned your child has a Special Educational Need?

If you have any concerns that your child may have a SEND need then please contact the SENDCo Mrs Holland:

hholland@theoaksacademy.co.uk

Or call the main office on 01270 661223

H. Holland

Assistant Headteacher - SENDCo

Faculty Focus: Science

As parents and guardians you play an essential role in supporting your child's learning journey and Science is no exception. From understanding the world around us to exploring the mysteries of the universe, Science is a subject that sparks curiosity, develops critical thinking and helps pupils build essential skills. Below, we provide an overview of what your

child will be learning in Science at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, along with practical tips on how you can support their learning at home.

Key Stage 3 Science: Laying the Foundation

In Key Stage 3, which spans Years 7 to 9, pupils are introduced to the core scientific concepts across three main disciplines: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The curriculum is designed to build a strong foundation, covering topics that will be explored in more detail at Key Stage 4.

Biology

At Key Stage 3 pupils study topics such as:

- The structure and function of cells, tissues and organs
- Human reproduction and the effects of lifestyle on health
- Ecosystems, food chains and biodiversity

How can you help?

- Encourage outdoor learning and nature walks to observe different ecosystems
- Help your child learn the key terms by creating flashcards for important topics

Chemistry

At Key Stage 3 pupils cover fundamental concepts such as:

- States of matter, changes of state and the particle model
- Acids, alkalis and neutralisation
- Elements, compounds and mixtures

How can you help?

- Find simple kitchen experiments that demonstrate chemical reactions, like making vinegar and baking soda volcanoes or dissolving salt in water
- Discuss the properties of everyday substances eg why soap works to clean oil to link the subject matter with real life examples

Physics

In Physics, pupils explore:

- Forces and motion, including speed, acceleration, and gravity
- Electricity, circuits, and energy transfer
- Light, sound, and the Earth's structure

How can you help?

- Watch physics-related demonstrations online, such as videos explaining how roller coasters work or the physics of sports
- Discuss simple concepts like how electricity powers devices in the home or how we use light and sound in communication.

Key Stage 4 Science: Deepening Understanding

As pupils move into Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11), the focus sharpens as they prepare for their GCSEs. Science at this stage becomes more specialised, with pupils studying Combined Science or choosing separate science GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Biology

At Key Stage 4, pupils dive deeper into:

- The human body systems, including the circulatory, respiratory, and digestive systems
- Genetics, inheritance, and evolution
- The impact of human activity on the environment

How can you help?

- Help your child create mind maps or diagrams to visualize body systems and processes like digestion and respiration
- Watch educational videos about genetic inheritance and discuss family traits to make the topic more relatable
- Discuss current environmental issues, such as climate change, to help them connect theory with real-world applications.

Chemistry

Key Stage 4 Chemistry expands on previous learning with:

- Atomic structure, the periodic table, and chemical bonding
- Chemical reactions and rates of reaction
- Energy changes and conservation

How can you help?

- Create a “science corner” at home where you can do safe and simple experiments together, such as exploring the effects of temperature on dissolving solids
- Encourage your child to read about famous chemists and their discoveries, fostering curiosity about the history and application of chemistry

Physics

Physics at Key Stage 4 is focused on:

- Forces, motion, and energy
- Waves, including light and sound, and their applications

- Electricity, magnetism, and the energy resources of the future

How you can help?

- Encourage your child to explore real-life examples of physics, such as how energy is used in daily life eg in cars or household appliances
- Discuss the basics of electricity and magnetism in everyday devices here are some general strategies to support your child in Science:

1. **Encourage Curiosity:** Ask open-ended questions that stimulate thought and encourage exploration of scientific concepts, like “What do you think happens when...?” or “How could this be applied in the real world?”

2. **Revise Regularly:** Help your child review and summarize key concepts regularly. Creating posters or flashcards for revision can be a fun and engaging way to consolidate learning.

3. **Explore Science Together:** Take trips to museums, science centres, or local parks, where your child can see science in action. Even watching a documentary or reading a science article together can provide valuable discussion points.

4. **Make It Practical:** Whenever possible, relate Science to everyday life. Simple activities such as cooking, gardening, or measuring things around the house can help reinforce scientific principles.

5. **Support Exam Preparation:** As your child progresses toward Key Stage 4, practice past exam papers together. Help them organise their revision, ensuring they focus on areas they find challenging.

By staying engaged and showing enthusiasm for Science, you can help your child not only perform well but also develop a lasting interest in the subject. Your involvement makes a world of difference in helping them understand the relevance and excitement of Science in the world around them.

Together, let’s inspire the next generation of scientists, innovators, and thinkers!

M. Hardy

Curriculum Team Leader - Science Faculty

UKMT Maths Challenges

This academic year the Maths Department is taking part in the UKMT Maths Challenges. On Wednesday 29th January, our top set Year 9 and 10 pupils took part within the Intermediate Maths Challenge. The UKMT challenges are designed to challenge pupils to think outside the box, helping students to develop their problem-solving skills. It is a brilliant opportunity for our more able pupils to further develop their mathematical abilities as well as stretch and challenge them. We are extremely proud of the effort that our pupils put in to this challenge and look forward to seeing how they got on.

On Tuesday 4th February, Ella G, Ethan H, Leon C and Chelsea F went to Shrewsbury school to take part in the UKMT Team Maths Challenge. They were in competition with other schools in the local area.

We are so proud of the pupils who showcased their mathematical ability in these competitions.

N. Slatford

Maths Teacher





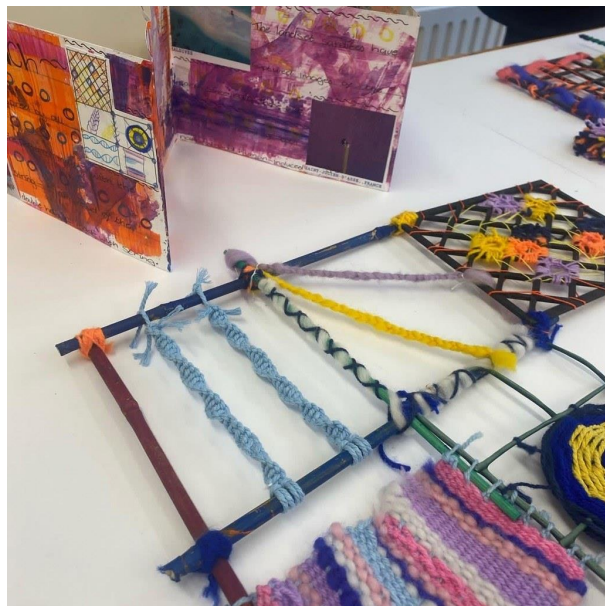
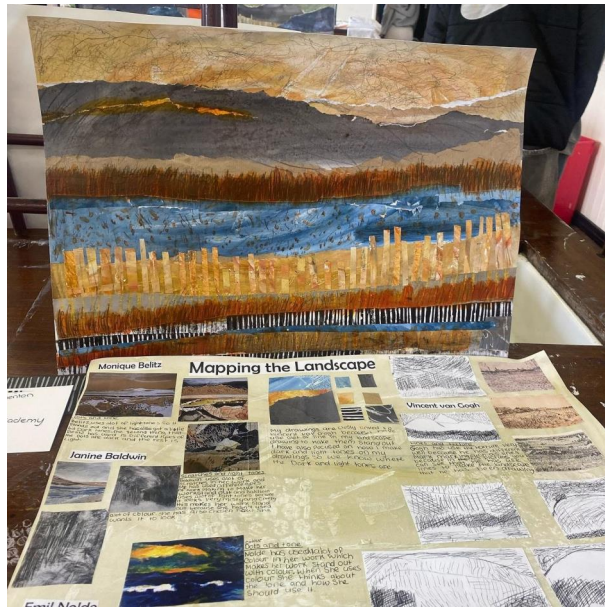
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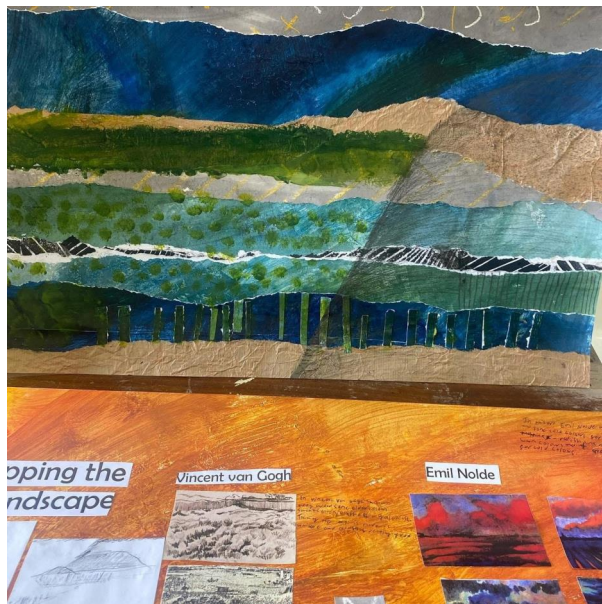
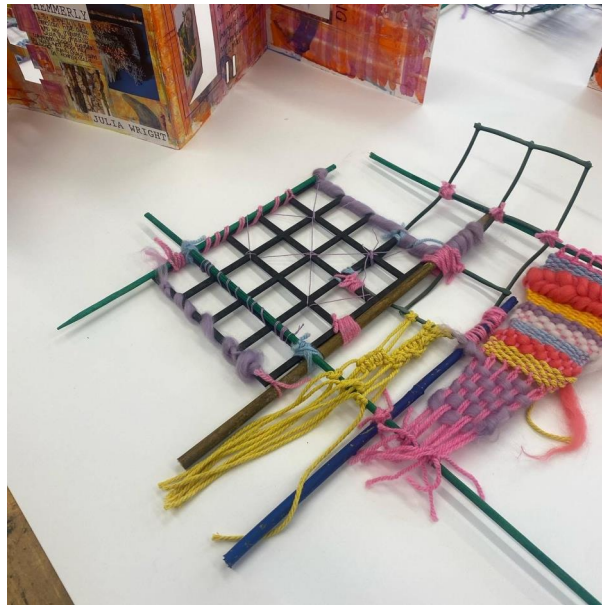
On Friday 7th February a group of 9 Year 10 and 11 pupils went to the Conway Centre in Wales for an Art Residential weekend. The pupils worked really hard and produced excellent and creative outcomes they should be proud of.

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development









Careers

Skills Builder

The Oaks Academy works with The Skills Builder Partnership to ensure that every learner has opportunities to build eight essential skills to support them now and in the future.

Research has shown that building these eight essential skills can support the emotional wellbeing and academic success of children and young people, as well as preparing them for life beyond school. Skills Builder has developed a Universal Framework that breaks each of these essential skills down into sixteen teachable steps. We use this framework to teach and practise each of the eight skills at the appropriate level throughout school life. Skills Builder has a resource platform dedicated to helping parents and carers to build their child's essential skills at home: Skills Builder Homezone. From Weekly Skill Challenges to family activities and guidance to share with older children to access independent tools for their own skill development, Skills Builder Homezone can be enjoyed at a time and pace to suit all families. Please visit www.skillsbuilder.org/homezone to access their resources and support the development of these skills from home.

National Apprenticeship Week

It is National Apprenticeship week from 10th-16th February. As part of our celebrations of this event we invited local employers and alumni students in to talk about apprenticeships. Our Year 11 pupils were visited by Alumni pupil Rhys Griffiths who was successful in gaining an Apprenticeship in Advanced manufacturing Engineering with local company B&E Engineering. Our Year 10 pupils attended a talk by the Cheshire College South and West Apprenticeship team. Year 9 pupils attended a talk by Balfour Beatty and Year 8 pupils attended a talk by Crewe Hall. We are very lucky to have such great local employers willing to give up their time for our pupils and we would like to publicly thank them all for their time.

Bentley Apprenticeship Roadshow

On Wednesday 5th February our Year 11 pupils were treated to a special assembly from Bentley. This special hour long assembly included a presentation about the company, their apprenticeship programme as a whole and the roles they have available this academic year. Current Bentley trainees were also in attendance and spoke about their roles and shared their experiences. Some lucky pupils were even invited to sit in the cars! Many thanks to Bentley and their staff for giving up their time to inspire our pupils.

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development













Calendar Dates

Here are some upcoming key dates:

- Monday 24th February - INSET Day
- Wednesday 5th March - Year 10 Mock Interviews
- Wednesday 19th March - Higher Horizons More Able Key Stage 3 Workshop
- Thursday 27th March - Year 8 Progress Evening