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The Oaks Academy Newsletter October 2025

Headteachers Update



Welcome to the October edition of our newsletter. In September we were delighted to welcome our new Year 7 pupils. We are at an exciting juncture in our journey to excellence. We will continue to demand high standards from our pupils in terms of behaviour, attendance and their learning.

We continue apace with our site improvements – in particular, this summer has seen the installation of new pupil computers and laptops and the latest technologies for data projectors in every classroom. We are also embarking on developing our PE zone with a significant uplift in January which will also include new KS3 toilets and PE changing rooms.

GCSE results this summer were again the best in the school's history – we have improved every year for 5 years now with the average grade increasing by one whole grade with pupils now making more progress than nationally. We are immensely proud of these achievements, and they reflect much hard work and effort by the pupils and staff. Our results over recent

years exemplify our drive to deliver the highest possible standards and outcomes for young people in the local community. We want our pupils to take pride in what they have accomplished.

We were delighted to welcome record numbers of new prospective parents and children to our Open Day in September and we fully expect the school to be oversubscribed again in Year 7 next year. Thank you as ever for your ongoing support and commitment to the school.

With best wishes.

Peter Kingdom

Headteacher

Whole School Focus: Teaching and Learning

Supporting Pupils with English as an Additional Language at Home

As part of our commitment to supporting our EAL pupils, we want to provide you with resources, strategies, and tips to help your child succeed in their language development and academic journey at home.

Understanding EAL

EAL (English as an Additional Language) refers to pupils whose primary language is not English. These pupils may face unique challenges, but with the right support at home, they can flourish.

Tips for Supporting EAL Learners

1. Encourage Daily English Use

- Create opportunities for your child to speak, read, and write in English every day. This can be through conversations, reading books together, or writing short stories.

2. Use Visual Supports

- Incorporate pictures, diagrams, and videos to help reinforce concepts. Visual aids can make learning more accessible and engaging.

3. Integrate Language Learning with Daily Activities

- Use everyday tasks—like cooking, shopping, or gardening—to practice English. Discuss what you're doing and encourage your child to describe actions or ingredients.

4. Create a Language-Rich Environment

- Surround your child with English through books, music, and educational programs. Consider setting up an English-speaking time at home.

5. Celebrate Multilingualism

- Encourage your child to maintain their first language while learning English. This can boost their confidence and cognitive skills.

6. Be Patient and Supportive

- Learning a new language takes time. Celebrate small achievements and provide reassurance to boost their confidence.

Resources for Parents

Books and Websites

- Explore bilingual books that feature both English and your child's first language.
- Websites like BBC Bitesize and Duolingo offer free resources for language learning.

Community Resources

- Check if your local library or community centre offers EAL programs or activities.

Thank you for your ongoing support in helping our EAL pupils thrive at home. Together, we can make a difference!

J. MacKreth-Aylett

Deputy Headteacher - Quality of Education



Whole School Focus: SEND

How to support your child at home with additional needs with their education.

Getting involved with your child's education is extremely important however if your child has additional needs, its even more important to be able to support them with continuing education at home, including support with homework. Your role as a parent is not to do the homework for your child but instead, provide structure and support when needed to complete their homework.

Please see below for some key points that you can do to support your child with their learning.

1. Download our school portal (Arbor)

By having access to Arbor, you will be able to see what positive or negative behaviour points, attendance and also their timetable. Using the app, you can have detailed conversations with your child, including asking them what they have learnt in their lessons that day and praise or support if they receive any behaviour points.

2. Homework

Does your child struggle with completing homework at home? Try the following strategies to support them:

- Draw up a homework timetable, this will help your child to manage their homework and not leave it to the last minute. Use Satchel One to find out what homework is due and when.
- Sit with them to discuss the homework first and how they might complete it. A lot of time homework is supporting the embedment of the topics that they have covered in lesson.

- Does your child struggle to get started and say's they can't do it? Use sentence starters to support them with this. ([Website to support](#))
- Once they get started, leave them to work independently and then keep returning to check in and praise them if they are completing it.
- Remember to be positive about learning at home. If it becomes a major chore then no one will be wanting to learn.

3. Revision

Supporting your child with revision doesn't have to be stressful.

There is a range of methods on how to support them.

- Make sure they are taking regular breaks.
- Encourage healthy eating and getting enough sleep.
- Test them, asking them questions will support their recall and build their confidence in time for their exam.
- Create a revision timetable (for GCSEs):

[Revision Timetable](#)

4. Workspace and distractions

Creating a workspace for them to complete homework and an area where they will not be easily distracted to enable them focus completely at the task they are doing.

5. Ask for support

If your child is struggling with completing homework, then please encourage them to go and see that member of staff for extra support or email the teachers directly asking them for further support.

If you have any questions or you would like more guidance on how to support your child to learn at home, then please get in touch with Mrs Holland via email.

H. Holland

Assistant Headteacher - SENDCO

Whole School Focus: Personal Development

Developing Confident, Well-Rounded Learners: Our Personal Development Programme

At The Oaks Academy, we believe that education is about far more than academic success, it's about developing confident, thoughtful, and resilient young people who are ready to thrive in the wider world. Our Personal Development Programme plays a vital role in achieving this, offering pupils a rich and varied curriculum that supports their growth in every area of life.

Through our PSICHE (Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education) curriculum, pupils explore important topics such as healthy relationships, mental and physical wellbeing, online safety, and active citizenship. These lessons help pupils understand themselves and others, develop empathy, and make positive, informed choices.

Our careers programme provides pupils with the guidance and experiences they need to plan for the future. From encounters with employers and workplace visits to personalised advice and guidance, we ensure every pupil can see clear pathways to future success and feels confident about the opportunities available to them.

The form time programme underpins much of our pastoral and personal development work. Each morning, pupils engage in activities designed to promote literacy, reflection, and responsibility. Tutors work closely with pupils to reinforce our behaviour expectations, ensuring that respect, kindness, and integrity are at the heart of school life. Form time also includes discussions and activities focused on equality and diversity, helping pupils appreciate the richness of different cultures, identities, and perspectives.

This year, we're delighted to introduce dedicated oracy lessons for pupils in Key Stage 3. These sessions are designed to help students speak with confidence, clarity, and purpose, essential skills for learning, employment, and everyday life. Whether debating current issues, presenting to an audience, or collaborating in group discussions, pupils are developing their ability to express themselves effectively and listen respectfully to others.

Through all aspects of our personal development provision, we aim to nurture pupils who are articulate, responsible, and ambitious young people who understand the importance of respect, resilience, and lifelong learning. By combining academic challenge with personal growth, we are preparing every pupil to take their place in the world with confidence and compassion.

Please visit our website for further details and information:

[CHARACTER programme](#)

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development





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Our Attributes



Careers & Finance



Health



Aspirations



Responsibility



Active citizen



Community



Tolerance



Emotional intelligence



Relationships

Faculty Focus: English

Key Stage 3

We're excited to share a new approach to assessment in Key Stage 3 English that is now being used across Years 7, 8 and 9. This new system is designed to build confidence, independence, and core skills in reading and analysis — all essential for success at GCSE and beyond.

What Is a QMF Assessment?

Each assessment is called a QMF, which stands for Quality Marked Formative Assessment, or a QMS, which stands for Quality Marked Summative Assessment. These are short, focused tasks that target specific skills in reading and writing. They are designed to be accessible, structured, and meaningful for all learners.

For example, in Year 7, students recently completed:

QMF 1: Knowledge and Evidence Selection Using an extract from *The Ghost of Gosswater*, pupils identified literary techniques (e.g. adjectives, similes, verbs) and selected short, relevant quotations. They then explained how the narrator's feelings were shown through language demonstrating their inference skills and ability to recognise the purpose of key language choices.

In Years 8 and 9, pupils have completed similar QMFs tailored to their texts and skill level — such as analysing character development, exploring writer's intent, or comparing viewpoints.

Why This Matters

This new style of assessment helps pupils to:

- Develop confidence in selecting and using evidence
- Build analytical skills in manageable steps
- Receive clear, targeted feedback
- Track progress over time in a way that's visible and motivating

Each QMF focuses on one key skill, allowing pupils to master it before moving on. This builds a strong foundation for GCSE English Literature and Language.

How You Can Support at Home

You can help by encouraging your child to:

- Read regularly — even short stories or extracts
- Talk about characters, settings, and how writers use language

- Practise spotting techniques like similes, adjectives, and verbs in everyday reading

If you'd like to see a sample QMF task or discuss your child's progress, please don't hesitate to contact the English department.

Key Stage 4 – GCSE

As we move into the heart of the GCSE preparation period, we want to share some practical and effective revision strategies to help your child succeed in both English Language and English Literature. Whether your child is in Year 10 building foundations or in Year 11 preparing for final exams, these tips can make a real difference.

English Language Revision Tips

English Language focuses on reading unseen texts and writing creatively or persuasively. Here's how pupils can prepare:

Eduqas Component 1 – 20th Century Literature Reading and Creative Prose Writing

- Read fiction regularly – short stories, novels, or extracts.
- Practise identifying techniques – similes, metaphors, adjectives, sentence types.
- Use past papers
- Creative writing practice – use images or prompts to write short stories or descriptions.

Eduqas Component 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

- Read non-fiction – newspaper articles, opinion pieces, speeches.
- Compare texts – practise spotting differences in tone, purpose, and viewpoint, particularly between 19th century texts and 21st century texts.
- Write persuasive pieces – letters, articles, or speeches on current issues.

This supports pupils with the skills needed to succeed in the Eduqas exams:

[Revision Guide](#)

English Literature Revision Tips

Literature exams require a strong knowledge of set texts and the ability to write analytical essays.

Key Texts to Revise – click the link to find the most relevant revision guide for each text:

[A Christmas Carol](#)

[An Inspector Calls](#)

[Macbeth](#)

[Poetry Anthology \(Power and Conflict\)](#)

Top Strategies

- Create quote banks – short, key quotes with meanings and techniques.
- Use revision cards – character, theme, and context summaries.
- Practise timed essays – using past paper questions.
- Watch revision videos – BBC Bitesize, Mr Bruff.
- Mind maps – link characters to themes and context.

How You Can Help at Home

- Encourage regular short bursts of revision (20–30 minutes).
- Ask your child to explain a character or theme to you — teaching helps memory!
- Help them stick to a revision timetable.
- Celebrate effort, not just results.

Thank you for your continued support.

C. Hind

Curriculum Team Leader - English Faculty

Faculty Focus: Maths

Sparx Maths: Building Confidence and Celebrating Success

This term, we're so pleased to see how many pupils have been using Sparx Maths to strengthen their maths skills. Thank you for supporting your children at home — together, we're helping every learner feel more confident and capable in maths.

How Sparx Maths Helps Your Child

Personalised Homework

- Each pupil receives homework that matches their ability and builds on what they're learning in class. This means the work is always challenging but achievable.

Support at Every Step

- Every question includes a short video that explains the topic clearly. Pupils can pause and rewatch these whenever they need help.

Plenty of Time to Complete

- Homework is set with enough time to complete it carefully. We recommend that pupils start early, so they have time to ask their teacher for help if needed.

The Importance of Bookwork

When completing Sparx Maths homework, pupils must write each question and answer down as they go. This is called their Bookwork. Sparx will ask Bookwork Check questions that test whether pupils have recorded and understood their work correctly. These checks help:

- Encourage careful and accurate working.
- Show teachers how well pupils are engaging.
- Build strong study habits that support success in exams and beyond.

How You Can Support Your Child

You don't need to be a maths expert to make a difference!

- ✓ Encourage your child to complete their Sparx homework early each week.
- ✓ Ask them to show you their bookwork and explain one of their answers.
- ✓ Remind them to use the help videos rather than giving them the answer.

Try asking questions like:

"What have you tried so far?"

"What does the question tell you?"

"Can you check that step again?"

Celebrate their effort and progress — it really boosts motivation!

Celebrating Student Success

We're so proud of the amazing effort our pupils have shown on Sparx Maths this year!

Top Achievers (XP Levels):

Georgi H – Year 8

Gabriel A – Year 9

Tali D - Year 9

Ala A F – Year 8

Lya S – Year 8

Consistent Effort:

Zofia K – Year 11

Fulan S – Year 11

Felicia M – Year 7

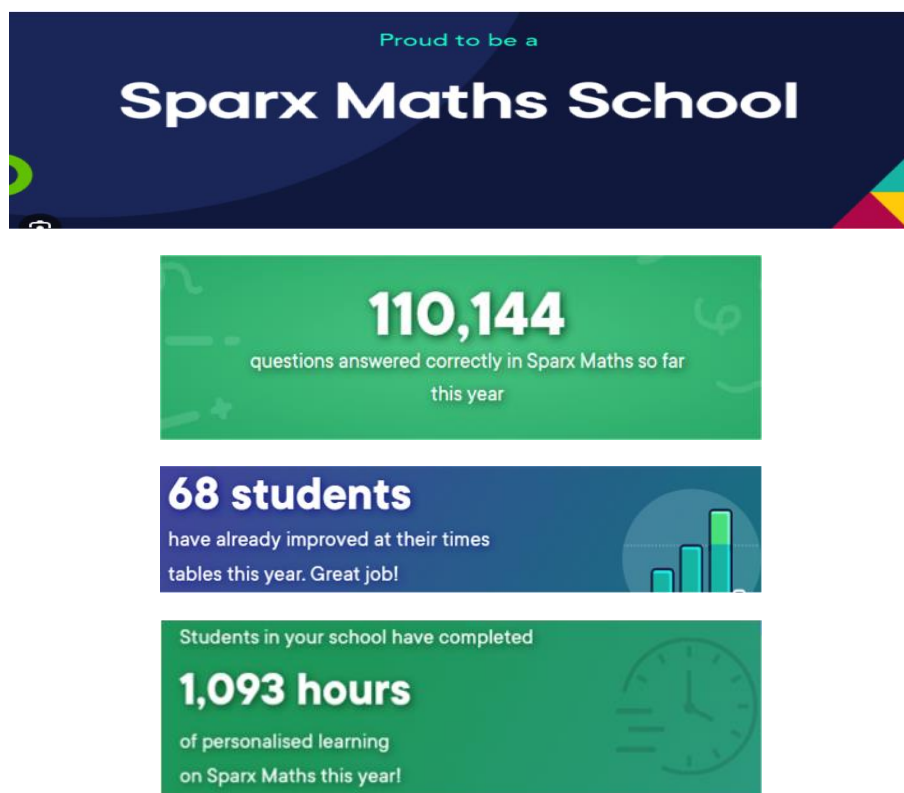
Above K – Year 11

Thank You!

Your support at home makes a huge difference. By encouraging your child to use Sparx Maths regularly and complete their bookwork carefully, you're helping them build confidence, independence, and a lifelong love of learning.

C. Highfield

Curriculum Team Leader - Maths Faculty



Careers Focus

Exploring Your Future: The Importance of Visiting Local Post-16 Open Evenings

Choosing where to study after Year 11 is one of the most important decisions young people make. With so many options available – from sixth forms and colleges to apprenticeships and specialist training providers – it can be difficult to know which path is right for you. That's why attending local **post-16 open evenings** is such a valuable part of the decision-making process.

Discover What's Out There

Open evenings give pupils and families the chance to explore the full range of opportunities available after GCSEs. Whether you're interested in A Levels, vocational courses, T Levels, or apprenticeships, these events provide first-hand insight into what each institution offers. You can view the facilities, talk to teachers and current pupils, and get a sense of the learning environment – something that's hard to capture from a website or prospectus.

Ask Questions and Get Personalised Advice

During open evenings, you'll have the opportunity to speak directly with subject teachers, careers advisors, and admissions staff. This is your chance to ask specific questions about course content, assessment methods, entry requirements, and potential career pathways. It's also a good time to discuss any additional support or enrichment opportunities, such as sports, volunteering, or student leadership programmes.

Experience the Atmosphere

Every institution has its own character and culture. Some pupils thrive in the smaller, familiar setting of a school sixth form, while others prefer the independence and variety of a larger college. Visiting different venues allows you to experience the atmosphere for yourself – to see where you feel comfortable, confident, and inspired to learn.

Compare and Reflect

It's a good idea to visit several different open evenings rather than just one. Even if you think you already know where you want to go, seeing a range of options helps you make an informed and confident choice. You might discover a course you hadn't considered, or realise that a different environment suits your learning style better. Taking notes and comparing what you see will help you evaluate which setting and course align best with your interests, goals, and future ambitions.

Plan Ahead and Get Involved

Many institutions hold open evenings in the autumn term, so it's worth checking dates early and planning your visits. Bring a parent, carer, or friend if you can – having someone to discuss your impressions with afterwards can be really helpful. Some colleges also offer taster days or workshops, which can give you an even clearer sense of what studying there would be like.

In Summary

Visiting local post-16 open evenings is about more than gathering information – it's about **finding the right fit for you**. Every student is unique, and the best choice is the one that matches your aspirations, interests, and preferred way of learning. By taking the time to explore your options and experience each setting in person, you'll be well prepared to make a confident and exciting next step in your education journey.

See websites for upcoming local institution Open Events:

[Cheshire College South and West](#)

[Reaseheath College](#)

[Sandbach College](#)

[Sandbach School](#)

[Malbank School and Sixth Form College](#)

[Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College](#)

[Crewe Engineering and Design UTC](#)

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development

Calendar Dates

Here are some upcoming key dates:

- Thursday 6th November - Friday 21st November - Year 11 PPEs
- Thursday 11th December - Christmas Performance (5.30pm start)
- Friday 12th December - SAC Day