

Friday 26th May 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now well into the summer term and our pupils in Years 10 and 11 are in the full swing of sitting public GCSE exams. They have been working hard up to this point and we know, with your support over the coming weeks, they have every chance of doing well.

It has also been a busy half term beyond the classroom. There is a full extra-curricular programme of activities running, including the first outing for our Duke of Edinburgh Award pupils, as well as a range of other events. Pupils have successfully taken part in the Battle of the Band competition. In addition, many of you joined us on Thursday 11th May for the Oakwood Awards. It was fabulous to see pupils, staff and parents come together and celebrate the successes of our young people.

School Day

When I wrote to you in March, we had started a consultation process on the structure of break times within the school day. The consultation with staff, pupils and parents was conducted between Monday 20th March and Friday 21st April. In total 39 staff, 188 pupils and 5 parents responded.

One of the biggest challenges we have is the number of pupils we have compared to the size of the building. It is great we are popular, but we all know that the building struggles to cope with over 1050 pupils moving around it at the same time.

Breaktime is the best example of this. We know if we make the break too long, pupils get bored, if it is too short, they do not have enough time to get food and use the toilet. The sheer volume of numbers also leads to pinch points when pupils come back into the building.

The results indicate that, although there will be some challenges to address in moving to the split break model, there are also some potential benefits, including; the reduction in queuing, more space to sit down, access to toilets, increased opportunity for building positive relationships and pupils feeling safer.

Therefore, from Monday 19th June the school day for years 7 to 10 will be structured as follows (Year 11 will have left after completing the majority of their exams):

A member of the Inspire Trust



Year 7 and 8		Year 9 and 10	
8.40	Tutor	8.40	Tutor
9.10	Movement	9.10	Movement
9.15	Period 1	9.15	Period 1
10.30	Break 1	10.30	Period 2
10.55	Period 2	11.45	Break 1
12.10	Break 2	12.10	Period 3
12.40	Period 3	13.25	Break 2
13.55	Period 4	13.55	Period 4
15.10	End	15.10	End

This will allow pupils to get used to the new routines with fewer pupils in the building before the new Year 7 pupils join us for Transition on Monday 10th July. At which point they will follow the break pattern for current Year 7 and 8. We will review the impact of this change at the end of the Winter term and make any adjustments if they are necessary.

Parent Pay

Please can we remind you that there is an online system available called ParentPay which will allow you to pay online for any payments to be made to school including school dinners, trips etc. If you need any help using this system or getting an account please don't hesitate to ask your child to contact the finance team who will be happy to help or email accounts@inspiretrust.uk or ring 01709 512222.

Free School Meal Eligibility

The last few years have been tough on many people and certainly, in the short term, things don't seem to be improving. Rising energy costs, inflation and the impact this has on family budgets can take their toll. Some families who are finding times hard may not yet have applied for a free school meal allowance. This provides your child with £2.50 a day to spend on food at school and will buy the meal of the day, which includes a dessert and drink. If you think you may be eligible, I would urge you to apply by following the link here: www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefits/apply-free-school-meals/1

Blazers

As the weather gets warmer I am often asked if pupils can remove their blazers in the building. If we have an exceptionally warm spell I will inform pupils and parents that this is the case. In the meantime we expect pupils to have their blazers with them and wear them at all times when they are moving between lessons. They can elect to take it off in the classroom if they are too warm. The vast majority of our pupils are really good at following this expectation and I thank parents for making sure your child is properly equipped for the day.

Footwear

At Oakwood we have a very simple uniform code. From time to time we need to revisit aspects of this to ensure standards are maintained. With regards to footwear the policy states:

- **Sensible, serviceable all black shoes or trainers (no coloured laces, logos, stripes, badges/labels (i.e Nike Air Force) soles or flashes). No platform or high heels. Boots are not acceptable. Footwear which extends above the ankle bone will be classified as a boot!**

Colour soles also include metal inserts that seem to be increasingly popular with some trainers at the moment. If in doubt ask the question 'is the entire shoe/trainer all black?' if the answer is no, then they should not be worn to school.

Graduation Reward Day 23rd June

I am really pleased to announce that our Graduation process which started in July 2022 is now approaching the final straight. Pupils were set the challenge to achieve a minimum 150 points to be Graduate and receive an invite to select the reward of their choice. The graduation total is calculated by adding a pupil's Attendance figure to their positive behaviour points minus their negative behaviour total. Currently, the Graduation figure shows that 97% of the school are on track to Graduate. Heads of House are working with those pupils who are below 100 points to give strategies on how to improve their total points. The Graduation events will take place on Wednesday 21st June and are outlined below:

- Alton Towers
- Trip to the Seaside (Cleethorpes)
- Xscape
- In-School event and enrichment activities

If your child is attending one of the offsite activities you should have already received a letter from the trip organiser.

Year 11 Arrangements

Our pupils have been working really hard and we want to make sure they are supported with their revision right up to the end, therefore pupils will be expected to attend school in full up to and including Friday 16th June. During this time they will attend their normal lessons, unless they have an exam, or a directed home study period, details of this will come out after half term. In addition to lessons, there will also be a series of school booster sessions prior to the remaining exams. From Friday 16th June, pupils will only be required to attend school for their remaining exams.

Year 11 shirt signing - Friday 16th June

One of Year 11s' key and often memorable events is the signing of their shirts. We must insist that pupils **do not write on their shirts** before this event as they will not be permitted to enter any exam and need to be responsible role models to younger pupils. The shirt signing will take place in Period 4 after the Geography exam on Friday 16th June. Pupils who still have exams the following week will not be permitted to sit an exam in a shirt with writing on.

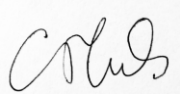
Chromebooks- all Y11 pupils who have met the graduation criteria will, as a reward for meeting expectations, be given their Chromebooks for free. Y11 pupils who have not met the graduation criteria and wish to keep their Chromebooks will need to pay £10 in cash to the main office or via Parent Pay. All Y11 pupils must bring their

Chromebooks into tutor period 16th June. This will allow the IT Team to remove the Chromebooks from our Safeguarding network and the responsibility for cyber safety will be that of the adults at home. Any Y11 pupils who do not wish to keep their Chromebook can also hand it in at this time. Y11 pupils need to save any work they may require by 14th June as everything will be wiped when it is removed from our network.

After all this, the Year 11s will have their Prom, on Wednesday 5th July, followed by the Leavers' assembly on Thursday 6th July, to look forward to.

Once again, I would like to say thank you for your ongoing support. Can I ask that we continue to work together for the interest of our pupils in a culture of mutual respect and positive relationships that makes the Oakwood family what it is.

Yours sincerely



Mr C Eccles
Headteacher

Upcoming Events

Friday 26th May	School closes for half term 3.10pm
Monday 5th June	School opens 8.35am
	Start of Year 9 ILEs
Friday 16th June	Year 11 shirt signing and stand down
Friday 23rd June	Y7-10 Graduation Event
Wednesday 5th July	Y11 Prom, Tankersley Manor 7pm
Thursday 6th July	Y11 Leavers Assembly
Friday 7th July	INSET DAY - school closed to pupils
Friday 21st July	School closes for summer break

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

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

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