



Exciting Relaunch of Character Education at OPHS

What a fantastic term it has been for our students to develop their character!

Our Character Programme was relaunched in September to reflect our four school values of Integrity, Excellence, Collaboration and Drive. Students can receive Character Points for great work in lessons and, via their Positive Character Card, points for good deeds. For example, making good conversation, picking up litter or helping a younger student. We are proud of all students who are going 'above and beyond' every day. Watch this space for news of our first Bronze Character Award winner!

Our students have also turned their energy and creativity to a range of Character Education activities, which have run this term across all subjects.

In Coding Character Club, Mr Spero and team set off rockets – flying them almost the length of our football pitch. The science department has run two clubs. In STEM Character Club, students have been busy making 'flares' in different colours using Bunsen burners; they came to conclusions regarding which chemical is the best, and in the KS3 lunchtime Science Character Club, students were busy dissecting hearts – budding heart surgeons in the making!



Fixtures have started again! Students have represented the school in Basketball, Football and Netball with some great performances demonstrating collaboration and drive.

In performing arts, outside agencies have recommenced their clubs, with our students benefiting from the best teaching around.

Our Steel Pans performers go from strength to strength. Mr Wright is running a range of musical opportunities in Production and Performance and live LAMDA lessons are underway again with Ms Ruby - We look forward to seeing their performances at the Winter Show.



The English department are running Big Ideas in Literature and Mr Marin is also providing opportunities for students to develop their ideas in Philosophy Character Club and learn about all things money in Economics Character Club – combine this with Ms Baatjies' Entrepreneur Character Club and we are bound to have successful business persons in the future! Equality Club has continued to build upon its strong membership with our students leading the way in ensuring that our school community is inclusive and respectful to all.

We are also proud to be relaunching the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme – many students have signed up for the Bronze Award and some are completing their Silver – watch this space for reports on their assignments including their expeditions, due to take place next Easter.

Homework Club runs three times a week, with Sparx Club available to support students with their 100% homework completion. Other opportunities include Art and Geography Character Clubs and OPHS Historians; with Debate and Languages Character Clubs – there is definitely something for everyone.

Watch this space for more exciting Character Clubs next term.



A message from the Head

The autumn term began with fresh faces and determination, and it is lovely to see that despite the contextual challenges we all face, the drive to be brilliant has sustained throughout the term. The launch of our new CharacterEd Cards. Our students make Orchard Park a great place to work and to learn. There has also been a wonderful focus on acts of charity including donations to food banks, a bake sale for St Christopher's Hospice, fundraising for Save The Children and donations to the Crisp Packet Project (homeless charity). The wide variety of CharacterEd clubs have been very popular: we are glad to be able to offer such opportunities again.

We have had lots of visitors from Greenshaw Learning Trust and Croydon Local Authority, plus our usual open events for year 6 families. The committed work of our staff and the conduct, pride and work ethic of our students is always a key feature of their glowing feedback. The Friends of Orchard Park (our PTA) have made an excellent start and have lots of exciting plans for our community. This is a great development for our school: a strong partnership between home and school secures success for our young people.

I know it has been a challenging year for all, and for some more than others. I hope the break gives everyone a chance to rest. We look forward to the new term and to supporting you and your child.

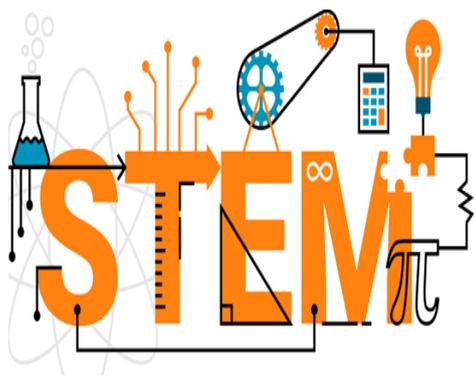
Ms Moran, Headteacher

STEM Club Update

Throughout the autumn term students attending the year 7 and year 8 STEM club have been carrying out some mind-blowing activities e.g. making flares, making elephant toothpaste, turning colourless sodium hydroxide pink with phenolphthalein and turning copper coins into gold (fool's gold). These activities have made the club popular, leading to an average of 25 pupils attending each week.

For the autumn term, we have focused on carrying out activities that investigate how science can be used to make substances change colour or state, or even disappear!

Students that attend receive 1 character education point each, and students that attend consistently will receive a certificate at the end of term for participating in all the STEM activities.



Science Club

Well done to our team of budding young scientists, who are keen and enthusiastic in attending our Friday lunchtime science sessions, in forever increasing numbers.

Our students have engaged in a wide range of fun science activities that will lay the foundations for their future engagement, excitement and interest in this core subject area.

Amongst the range of activities that students have experienced, the most memorable ones to date include the heart dissection, observing onion cells under the microscope and making bridges out of straws.

Our science department is delighted with the interest that our KS3 students have shown in attending and participating in this character education club.

Year 7 AYL update

It has been really encouraging to see how quickly the year 7 students have transitioned so smoothly into secondary school life and I have been so impressed with the way that they conduct themselves around school and in lessons. It has been a busy term with a trip to the Shakespeare's Globe theatre to see *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the behaviour from the students was impeccable and they were praised by members of the public for their conduct on public transport. We have also had our first Netball and Football fixtures, as well as great interest in the Fun Friday challenges such as collecting crisp wrappers to turn into blankets for the homeless (I counted 454 wrappers from Year 7!), one kind word day where students used chalk to write one kind word on the playground and taking the best picture of a firework at a fireworks display.

We have also had some personal successes within the year group. Firstly to Dasko for winning the Design a Christmas Card competition, which is being sent out to members of the local community and also to the 5 students who have topped the Character Points leaderboard this term- Hiritthik (77) Molly (75), Daniil (75), Safi (60), Kamari (60) and Emmi (58) have all shown consistency in their application to lessons and have contributed in various ways within the school community. Overall 7Newton have led the tutor group leaderboard with a total of 887 Character Points. I am privileged to be the Academic Year Leader to such a polite and friendly cohort and I have enjoyed the students approaching me to start conversations with me on the playground (and to try and get a Character Point on their PCC card!!)

Thank you for supporting your child on this new journey into secondary school; your support throughout the next five years will contribute immensely to your child's success and wellbeing at Orchard Park. A reminder that year 7 are expected to complete self-quizzing every night and ensure that they are following the homework schedule. They should also be spending 30 minutes reading each night as well as completing the Sparx Maths homework which is set at 3pm every Thursday and is due the following Wednesday at 2pm. If your child is struggling to access the programme at home or having difficulty completing homework, we run a homework club every Monday after school and a Sparx club on every Tuesday after school and Wednesday lunchtime.

Finally, I want to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas. I hope you all have a restful break and I look forward to seeing the year 7 students refreshed and ready for the term ahead when we return in January.

Miss Goodwin, Year 7 Academic Year Lead

Year 8 AYL update

It has been a pleasure getting to know year 8 this term. Every student has shown a positive attitude to their studies since our return in September. We are really pushing each student to exceed their potential in every subject and in every lesson. This term Sancho has the most character Education points with 803 points, a great effort. Ami (107) Maisie (76) and Rosie-Mae (49) are leading the way in the individual race, a superb effort by the girls.

Although we have a huge focus on your child's academic progress and learning in the classroom, it's vitally important that every student can relax and also enjoy their time at school doing a variety of activities. Each Friday the weekly winning tutor group has Fun Friday with Mr Atherton, playing sport or board games and other fun activities together in the Gym.

We have had many students showing a keen interest to participate in after-school clubs, with outstanding individual performances in Music, Drama and our sports teams this term. I encourage every student to sign up for as many clubs as they can next term.

I would like to thank all parents for your continued support throughout this term.

Mr Atherton, Year 8 Academic Year Lead

Year 9 AYL update

Year 9 have made an outstanding start to this academic year. The hard work and dedication they have shown in everything they do is evident to all members of staff throughout the school. This is reflected in being the only year group to win the Sparx completion competition every week.

It is fantastic to see so many students progressing in the Duke of Edinburgh's award, volunteering in various afterschool clubs, gaining skills and pushing themselves physically. I would like to thank all teachers, tutors and prefects for helping create a buzz around our character education programme. It was great to see many students collecting character points on their new Positive Character Cards .

I look forward to continuing the academic year with you all and seeing you at the Year 9 Parents Evening on 26th January. This will be a great opportunity to discuss progress so far, in preparation for the GCSE options process which will begin mid-spring term.

I would like to give a special mention to the following students:

Jojo Stanley - Sports star of the term

Angel Musoke - 1st on the Sparx leaderboard

I wish every one of you and your families a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Mr Latouche, Year 9 Academic Year Lead

Year 10 AYL update

Year 10 have had a brilliant start to this academic year. They have made a really smooth transition into GCSE life and have responded really well to the academic calibre and the large amounts of effort it takes to really succeed in their subjects; their resilience is admirable!

A particular shout out to the following students for being the top workers/achievers in their subjects:

Art - Eva and Annabelle

Business - Mark, Salma, Michael J, Remus and Eren

Citizenship - Inara

English - Diana, Eva, Daniela, Salma, Jack B (top student in each class)

French - Tania

Geography - George, Joseph, Levi and Zachai

History - Sammy, Abi B, Ben, Salma, Elise, Alex J

Maths - Casey, Daniel, Bhavesh, James, Liam S, Elise, Harry M

Music - Joseph and Abi B

PE - Grace, Inara and Charlie

Photography - Abi, Sophie, Erica

RS - Ben

Science - Biology - Aimee

Science - Chemistry - Erica

Science - Physics - Liam S, Remus

Sociology - Claire

Spanish - Eva

Two of our students in year 10 have made a real effort to meet with Ms Moran and discuss how we can promote charitable giving in the school – thank you to Chelsea and Alvyna for being our Charity Ambassadors and for supporting the school in our Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children. Chelsea and Alvyna will also be helping to lead the year group in more charitable events next year – top work girls!

Year 10 have been working really hard on getting their Character Cards signed in the last two weeks of term – it is encouraging them to showcase the brilliant young people that they are; long may this last into the new year.

Finally, a massive well done to our boys football team who have attended a number of fixtures this term, including our most recent away match. Although the boys came away with a draw, it was most definitely a moral victory, where they showed incredible sportsmanship and collaboration. Well done lads.

Thank you to all the staff that have supported year 10 this term and, of course, to the parents and carers of these children, whose support is invaluable.

Wishing all of your families a restful break and a happy holidays; we look forward to having the students back in the new year

Ms Ferigan, Year 10 Academic Year Lead

Year 11 AYL update

Our year 11 students have been outstanding this term, showing great dedication and commitment to achieving the best possible grades in the Pre Public Examinations (PPEs). I was absolutely delighted with their attitude to their PPEs - they utilised the extra opportunities for revision that were offered by teachers and both staff and visitors noted their exemplary conduct in and around their exams.

We are delighted that, for many students, this hard work has resulted in some significant improvements in their outcomes since the end of year 10. This is just rewards for their hard work. It is important now that they build on this positive start, with outstanding focus and effort in every lesson and by attending Champions Hour, Working Lunch and tutoring and committing to more independent study. We want them to take confidence from this round of PPEs and focus now on the actionable steps that their teachers have given them to improve.

I would also like to say a really big well done to our Head Prefect Stephanie, who had the opportunity to take part in a Speak Out challenge this term at the Cambridge Theatre in front of hundreds of people. She did herself and everyone else at Orchard Park proud.

Thank you to the families who attended parents' evening - I know that many useful conversations were had. We had hoped for the evening to be face to face but the virtual format was considered a better option at this time.

It has been a pleasure getting to know year 11 students this term and I look forward to the next. I wish you all a well rested break.

Ms Walsh, Year 11 Academic Year Lead



Safeguarding Update

The Safeguarding Team welcomed Ms Ruby and Ms Graham in September to strengthen the support available for all students. In addition, four members of the team have also completed their Mental Health First Aid course to ensure that staff are well equipped to provide the most relevant and appropriate guidance in this area.

Ms Turner has been recently appointed as Pastoral Support Manager, with a particular focus on mental health.



With a group of students, she has resourced our new centre, called The STAR – which stands for Strength, Triumph, Aspiration and Resilience. This centre is available before and after school for all students and throughout the day by appointment, based on a referral system.

We have a mentoring system and counsellors available, should the students need additional support.

All students participated in a special Wellbeing assembly, which explained the key concepts around mental health and the support on offer, in and out of school.

At the beginning of the term, Ms Rogers and I delivered an assembly covering the important topics of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and Harassment, Female Genital Mutilation and Radicalisation and Extremism.

As a school, we are very aware of the pressures on young people today, particularly regarding peer on peer abuse, both in person and online, using social media.

Our Safer Schools Officer, PC Mason delivered special assemblies explaining the impact of bullying on the individual and outlined possible police action.

We hope that students feel confident to report any instance of bullying, no matter how small, so it is dealt with swiftly.

Please check our website for more information or contact one of the team if you have any questions.

Wishing you all a happy and safe Christmas break.

Ms Smyrk, Ms Rogers and Ms Turner

Fun Friday!

It has been another term full of fun and not just on a Friday!

This term has had us writing remembrance day stories, photographing our firework displays, designing posters about our tutor group names and thinking about our mental health and wellbeing.

We have raised awareness about Refugee week and explored the role that friendship can have in making people feel included and supported with the theme being “We cannot walk alone”. We took part in Recycle Week by supporting The Crisp Packet Project. This amazing charity recycle crisp packets into blankets for the homeless. There was lots of crisp eating that week from our students, that’s for sure!

We held a bake sale to raise money for the amazing St Christopher’s Hospice. Students were more than generous with their donations of home baked goods and we raised over £200 for this wonderful charity.

Anti-bullying week made us think about the theme ‘One Kind Word’ and students decorated our playgrounds at break and lunch time with kind words in chalk. It was a joy to see.

Christmas fun started in December with our Christmas card competition and a big congratulations goes to our winner, Dasko in year 7, who designed a fabulous card that has been printed and used as our school Christmas card this year.

Last Friday we took part in Save The Children Christmas Jumper day raising a fantastic £229. Everyone involved looked very festive and we celebrated the day with free hot chocolate and cookies at breaktime for everyone and some festive singing and dancing in the playground.

What a term! I feel very proud to be part of such a generous, supportive and caring community here at Orchard Park and am looking forward to more Fun Friday tasks and challenges in the new year.



Equality Club

This term equality club has re-launched our 'that's not okay' campaign with a focus on challenging the misuse of language during social times. We have led assemblies to year 7 and 8 about the importance of the language we use and the effect it can have on others. We have collectively pledged that we will call out offensive, inappropriate or misunderstood language within our school community and we will eliminate the bystander effect by educating others when they are getting things wrong.

We have also led a Food Bank drive to support those in need this winter and we are very grateful for the generosity of our wonderful Orchard Park families.



Year 10 Thames Water Visit

The Science Department organised a trip to the Thames Water Long Reach Sewage Treatment Works in Dartford for year 10 students.

Over the course of the day, the group toured the site, purified water and understood the value of the hidden engineering which makes modern city living possible. The visit also focussed on how we could all contribute to helping it work better.

Along with the wastewater treatment, the students understood the value that the site had along the banks of the Thames estuary, in providing managed space for wild animals, especially many rare bumblebee species.

The students also carried out some exciting hands-on sessions, including practical science experiments such as 'Poo Power' and 'Sewage Soup'.

Many thanks to Greg at Thames Water for hosting us and also to Ms Hansford, for driving the minibus.

Performing Arts at OPHS

This term in performing arts, our students in year 7 have been hard at work studying drumming, choreography, and characterisation. In year 8 students have explored The Blues, the history of dance crazes and semiotics and symbolism. Year 9 have been studying film music, the professional work *Shadows* by Christopher Bruce in dance and *Stanislawski* in drama. Our year 11 exam classes have created some fantastic mock performance work, year 10 drama are flying with script work and our year 10 music class have formed a very impressive Steel Band.

We continue to develop and strengthen our relationships with external organisations and this term we have been fortunate to have two dance clubs run by Step into Dance through the Royal Academy of Dance, Workshops with ZooCo Theatre Company and a very exciting project with Bird Gang Dance Company which will result in a piece to be performed in a large scale venue. We have had a very successful whole year group trip with year 7 to Shakespeare's Globe and have had in house workshops with the Globe too.

Please look out for letters next term as we have lots of exciting trips coming up for both the spring and autumn term.

We completed the term with our annual Winter Show and are thrilled to say that although we had a limited audience it was live and enjoyed by all who attended. We are so proud of each and every performer and there will be lots of Performing Arts badges handed out next term by way of recognition of their success.



OPHS Sports Update

It has been a very busy and productive term for our sports teams, along with our after school clubs. It has been great to see so many students attending clubs and representing the school.

We have had some superb performances, but a special mention must go to the year 7, 8 and 9 football teams, who all remain unbeaten in their respective Croydon leagues. Year 11 are through to the last eight of the Croydon Cup; hopefully they can end a successful journey with some silverware.



Our year 9 netball team also remain unbeaten in the Croydon Schools League.

The following students have been awarded "Athlete of the term" in their respective year groups by the department - congratulations and well done!

Boys

Year 7 - Malachi Henry

Year 8 - Ryan Kabale

Year 9 - Jojo Stanley

Year 10 - Isreal Akinyooye

Year 11 - Joshua Cole

Girls

Year 7 - Holly Martin-Richmond

Year 8 - Judith Antwi

Year 9 - Ketsia Boka

Year 10 - Sophie Derham

Year 11 - Stephanie Gyamfi

We look forward to soon reporting on the basketball season!

KEY DATES FOR 2022

4th January: Inset Day- closed to students

5th January: C19 Testing for students

Yr11 - 8.30-9am

Yr10 - 9.30-10am

Yr9 - 11-11.30am

Yr8 - 12-12.30pm

Yr7 - 1.45-2.45pm

6th January : Normal school day

Parents Evenings - 4pm-6:30pm

Y9 - 26th January

Y8 - 9th February

Y7 - 9th March

TERM DATES

Spring Term

4 January to 11 February 2022

Half Term: 14-18 February 2022

21 February to 8 April 2022

Easter Holiday: 11 - 22 April 2022

Summer Term

25 April to 27 May 2022

Half Term: 30 May to 3 June 2022

6 June to 22 July 2022



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