



Multi Academy Trust

Opportunity • Achievement • Kindness

APRIL 2025

OUR TRUST NEWS

**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
OAK MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**



Opportunity

Achievement

Kindness

CEO Update - Andy Wilson



As we come to the end of a busy and productive term, it's a great time to reflect on all that's been achieved across our schools. We've welcomed a variety of visitors, including school leaders from across the country, who have been keen to learn from the great work happening at OAK. Ofsted visits to Woodland Grange Primary and Overdale Infant School were incredibly positive, recognising the dedication and hard work that go into supporting our young people every day. In addition, Challenge Partners visits gave external reviewers the chance to see the early impact of our FRONTIERS program including the 1:1 iPad initiative—which is already making a real difference in our schools, with every reviewer indicating their determination to encourage a similar program to be considered in their schools.

A special congratulations to Overdale Juniors for achieving the FA's Equal Access for Girls School Award. Ensuring equity for all our young people remains at the heart of everything we do as we continue to live our mission "Together we grow great schools".

We are also currently reviewing our food offer across our schools and are working hard to bring an even better offer to pupils next academic year. We recognise just how important it is to provide great food and will be bringing you more information on the progress of this work during the summer term.

In a few short weeks, our fantastic new sports hall will be ready to open. We are proud to be naming this facility after Simon Cole, who attended both Brookside Primary and Manor High School before becoming Leicestershire Police Chief Constable and Trustee of OAK Multi Academy Trust. We look forward to the opening ceremony soon after Easter.

Wishing you all a well-deserved break before we head into what promises to be an exciting summer term!

Estates

The Estates team have been very busy during the winter and spring with the new waste regulations implemented over all sites, which includes the statutory requirement to separate all food waste, particularly pertinent where there is a lot of fruit on site; Brookside have led the way with their excellent composting solutions and all the other primaries now have dedicated food waste bins to ensure we can separate at source.

This all feeds into reducing our carbon foot print/net zero aspirations and now that the days have started to warm so the site teams have been able to reduce both heating temperatures and times with the aim of complete switching off heating systems no later than Friday 11th April. Moving into the summer months, we are going to be just as assiduous with air con systems, setting them no lower than 22degrees C and ensuring that where they are being used, all windows and doors are kept shut.

Condition Improvement Funding

The Trust has been very proactive in maximising its capital funding applications for 24/25, with the following CIF bids applied for :

- Overdale Infants School – New air source heat pumps, full heating distribution system and heating emitters
- Overdale Junior School – New air source heat pumps, full heating distribution system and heating emitters
- Woodland Grange Primary – Replacement of windows and external doors to increase thermal efficiency
- Manor High School – Replacement of flat roofing system and associated skylights to science and DT departments, and Fire compartmentation works

All 5 projects face major engineering challenges and must be completed within very narrow time parameters. The funding applied for is substantial and with a limited CIF budget the DFE is unlikely to approve all of our projects but we believe we have submitted technically and evidentially strong bids, so we are fairly optimistic.

Manor High School Sports Hall

April 25th will mark the culmination of Manor High's sporting facilities ambition with the completion of the new sports hall and four classrooms. The Manor project has also been nominated for a National Site Award by the Considerate Constructors Scheme. These awards celebrate construction sites that go above and beyond in respecting the community, caring for the environment, and valuing the workforce. Below are some images of where we are now:

Car park ready for tarmac, block paving and EV chargers.



(L): First floor classroom corridor with viewing windows to the right

(R): Classrooms doors with full length side view panels



Viewing window

The high-tech cushioned floor is going down

(R): Toilets located within the changing rooms.

Far right: The changing rooms are nearing completion



(R): Lighting and heating is in



(Above R): This is three of the classrooms waiting for their acoustic bi-folding doors which will make the space versatile with many more useful options

Other Estates Projects

Safeguarding

Brookside Primary have recently installed 115m of new fencing to separate parents and carers from traffic in their car park.



New Playground

The new EYFS playground at Woodland Grange Primary has proven to be a big hit!



Governance news



Manor High School

Following an election, we are pleased to welcome Chris Brettton to join Manor High School as Parent Governor. Chris is a serving Police Officer and we are looking forward to working with him on the Local Governing Body.

Also recently appointed is Ashraf Patel, Head of Facilities Management at Sainsbury's. The skill set he brings to the Local Governing Body will enhance the school's governance even further.

Woodland Grange Primary

At Woodland Grange we are thrilled to welcome Vina Pankhania as Parent Governor. She has already attended her first meeting and will continue to support the Local Governing Body.

The Board is also joined by Toni Merriman, who brings vast experience of the Primary and Secondary sector.

OAK Trustees

Here in the central team, we are thrilled to welcome Jaina Parmar to the Board of Trustees. Not only is Jaina local, but she currently works for the Confederation of School Trusts (CST) and we are delighted with the skills and knowledge she can bring to the Board.

Frontiers Update

Frontiers is a key strategic aim for OAK and currently in place at 3 of our schools (soon to be 5!) Each school has implemented 1:1 digital devices to pupils. The intention of this project is to give teachers and pupils the very best digital tools available to support teaching and learning. We are now into the second term of this project and wanted to update on the journey so far.



At **Woodland Grange Primary School**, all pupils from Year 1 to 6 are using their iPads in the classroom. Staff are using an app called 'Showbie' to set work and provide resources to support children with their learning. This is done in a variety of ways depending on the subject.

Staff have already begun to see the transformation in the way children complete their work. They are still supported by the adults in class in the usual way, but they can also view the teacher input on their device, reminders on what they have to do, key information that they could use and extension tasks to push them further in their learning. Handwriting and presentation are still a priority, whether the children are writing in a book or on an iPad.

For some pupils, support goes beyond a single lesson or unit of work. The adaptive features that the devices can provide means that pupils can access the curriculum in the same way as their peer group. Staff are using the accessibility functions on the pupil devices to change font or screen size, provide coloured overlays to screens when reading or writing digitally. There are language features, meaning children whose first language is not English can understand what they have to do in a lesson.



At **Manor High School**, pupils are engaging well, making excellent progress, and using iPads to collaborate, research, and develop key skills. Lessons are now more interactive, enhancing learning both in and beyond the classroom. Showbie is the most utilised platform. Resources are uploaded for students, and this is where they complete their learning and store their work. Staff are able to upload PowerPoints, worksheets, videos, web-links and so much more.

Year 7 brought settlements to life using iPads, crafting dynamic presentations, maps, and reports, whilst Year 8 tackled urban geography through the Burgess Model, analysing real-world cities and delivering compelling, well-structured presentations.



iPads have been a great way for us to encourage student independence, both in reading and in writing tasks. Using class models, worked examples, knowledge organisers, vocabulary builders, writing frames, and so many more support systems, students can use their split screen mode to find what works best for them. When completing longer written tasks, students decide what will help them most and can easily switch between the different types of support that we offer. Learning is not only easily personalised by the individual student, but students say they like being able to 'look back on work at home' (Keren, Y8).

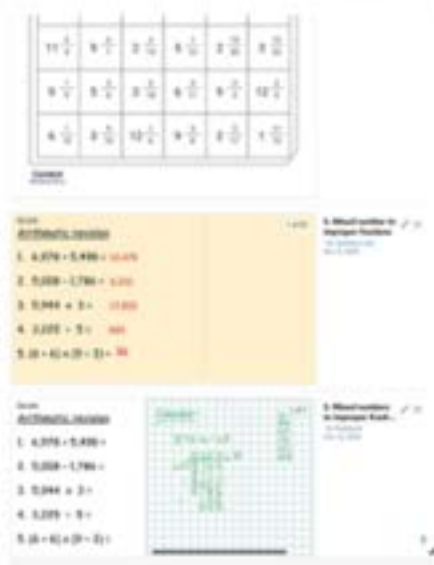
Quick quizzes have also been a great way of engaging students and bringing some friendly competition into the classroom. They allow teachers to check student understanding quickly and address any misconceptions that arise, making identifying and closing gaps more effective than ever



Overdale Juniors tell us that some of the work that is being produced by the children is amazing. The children are able to use the iPads to be creative, more independent and explore different ways of presenting their work. The school makes extensive use of Showbie and Apple Classroom; this app allows staff to control and watch what the children are doing during the lesson.



Maths – Staff are able to put lots of resources the children can use for the maths lesson on their Showbie account. They record videos showing how they model the work, put different sheets up and extend their learning with challenges.



English – Writing is still really important and staff make sure that all English work is written up in books but pupils use the iPads to help create great ideas, find language, help them to spell, story board in different ways, design characters and so much more.

Foundation Subjects – The school has been trying the iPads out for all sorts of things. In science pupils have been taking pictures and building an animal classification chart. Year 3 have been trying out digital art and pupils have been able to look up different places in the world to look at the landscapes. Pupils answer surveys, quizzes and collaborate with their class too. There is so much to explore with this new technology.



Pupil Voice

'The iPads help us to find things out. We can research online and get a better range of results, like looking at satellite images of cities. '

"We get to try learning in new ways." – Anushka, Y9

'The teacher air dropped a website for us to use in our lesson. It was all about hill forts and we could see what they would have looked like.'

"They help to [complete] homework and activities after school." – Katharine, Y9

"I think they are really good, it is really easy to find new and better words for our writing. We can type, voice note but in English we always have to write. I like using the different apps to do work like Keynote."

Zayne year 5.

"They have a large variety of tools to use to learn." – Henry, Y8

'I liked using Blooket in class. When I got home we set up an account at home too.'

'It's good when you are drafting a piece of writing because you can draft it more quickly on your iPad before you edit and write it out in your book.'

"It's easier to find the work you need if you miss a lesson." – Lily, Y7

"I like using iPads to do work, the videos are good because it shows us what we have to do if we've forgotten. It is quite good for learning, we can search things ourself like when we don't know a spelling, we don't have to wait for the teacher." Max year 4.

Climate and Nature Action in Education

The DfE Sustainability and Climate Change strategy calls for all schools to have a sustainability leader by 2025. We agree that climate leadership is vital, but we cannot leave saving the planet to only one person. Change might begin with individual leaders, but it thrives in communities. Individuals alter the course of history by coming together; tackling climate change is no exception. That is why it is so important for anyone interested in working on sustainability in schools to come together, to amplify your voices and experience the strength, comfort, and hope that comes from knowing you are not in this alone.

We have been working hard with each primary school to set up a climate action plan, alongside Jelly Moring, of **Let's Go Zero**. Climate action plans for each school are now almost complete, and we now have representatives from each school acting as sustainability lead and over the coming months our working group will meet, share best practice and ideas to help shape estates management, procurement, curriculum, engagement and much more. If you have any ideas to share, please feel free to drop an email to dbenyon-payne@oaktrust.org.

We must do all we can to change the outcome for our environment by creating the **Opportunity** for pupils and staff to learn how to make a change, giving children the chance to **Achieve** change in ways that helps the Earth recover and teaching and showing **Kindness** towards nature and our planet.

🧐 **Personal Action - Co-benefits** 🧐

It can be difficult to know what action to take to help tackle climate change as an individual. The Met Office recently published ideas we can all consider taking that have the greatest impact. Not everyone will be able to make these changes, but it is worth reflecting on what is achievable so that our combined efforts can make a real difference.

Olio is a sharing app for local communities, making it easy to give away the things you don't need to someone else who would value them. When they first started out, they fought food waste. Today, they fight any thing going to waste. From food to furniture and clothing to books, Olio is the feel-good way to declutter. Olio works with local businesses and supermarkets, but is also a neighbourhood app too, so you can swap, share or donate items within your community. The app is free to use, and all items being donated are free.

Olio is not just free food, there's also a section for borrowing items from local people, and a free marketplace area. On there you can request clothes, books, furniture and anything else that people are getting rid of. So download it and give it a go.








Sustainable Easter:

For anyone that hasn't already bought their Easter Eggs, here are a few 'Sustainable(ish)' options to have a plastic free Easter: [SUSTAINABLE\(ISH\) EASTER EGGS – Sustainable\(ish\)](#).

[Water Saving Week: 12th to 16th May](#)
Water Saving Week | Campaign | Waterwise



Your mission could include:

-  Laundry Legend – Make every wash count
-  Tap Guardian – Save water, one drop at a time
-  Shower Saviour – Trim a minute, save litres
-  Dishwasher Defender – Wash wisely, waste less
-  Leak Buster – Find and fix sneaky leaks

Could you become a governor?

- **Make a real difference to the outcomes for young people**
- **Gain a variety of professional and personal skills**
- **Access to a wide variety of training and CPD**
- **Contribute to shaping the education of the next generation**





Being a governor is a hugely rewarding form of voluntary work and can offer you the opportunity to make a real contribution to the education of children and young people in your community.

What are we looking for?

We are not looking for specific experience, we need people with enthusiasm and a commitment to the role, willing to provide both support and challenge to the Headteacher and the drive to continually strive to make things better.

What difference will you make?

A strong governing board ensures robust debate and dynamic ideas, which in turn lead to better educational outcomes for children.

What's in it for the volunteer?

Being a school governor is challenging and rewarding. You will make a real difference to young people, give something back to your local community and use and develop your skills.

What will you be doing?

You will be required to attend 3 meetings per year, in person. There is an expectation that documents are read in advance. Training and support is readily available and can be undertaken at a time that suits you. In time, you may be asked to take on a role relating to a statutory requirement like safeguarding and will be asked to visit the school once a year in this capacity.

**Contact us: for more information please contact Governance Lead
Danielle Benyon-Payne on dbenyon-payne@oaktrust.org**

Inspire Together - 60 Active Minutes

Inspire Together are joining four-time Olympian Mo Farah in his mission to ensure that all children and young people are active for at least 60 minutes a day. 'Mo's Mission'.



To support this, Inspire Together have launched a 60 Active Minutes campaign to raise awareness with local parents, carers, teachers and other responsible adults about the importance of children & young people being active for at least 60 minutes throughout the day. This is proven to support not only the physical health & wellbeing of children, but also to improve their mental health, mood and concentration throughout the day.

To support the 60 Active Minutes campaign they have launched a dedicated page on their website filled with fun activities and ideas to inspire movement for young people and their families, which is refreshed each month. They have even included a half-termly prize draw for parents of any children who have attended an Inspire Together session or event to win sports equipment & goodies.

[Find out more here](#)



Inspire Together

World Book Day March 2025

Reading is so important for many different reasons: Academic Performance, Focus and Concentration, Emotional and Social Development. We are always so happy to see the ways in which our staff and pupils engage with World Book Day and celebrate our shared love of reading. We were thrilled to see so many different activities across all schools, including door decorating (see below), a BBC live lesson with author Pamela Butchart, storytelling assemblies and year 6s supporting younger pupils with their reading. Woodland Grange staff took part in the 'Masked Reader' which was great fun.



World Book Day March 2025



World Book Day recommends:

1. Being read to regularly
2. Having support in finding the time to read
3. Having books available at home and school
4. Supporting children in finding books for them
5. Making reading fun
6. Having a choice in what is read



Maths Competition

In March, four Year 8 and 9 students participated in the UKMT Team Maths Challenge at Leicester Grammar School. The Maths Challenge is not an easy undertaking, yet our students showcased outstanding problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and teamwork. Each student represented our school with pride and enthusiasm.

A huge round of applause for the effort and commitment shown by the Manor High KS3 students in preparing for this prestigious competition! Their spirit of collaboration, unwavering support for one another, and perseverance in tackling challenging problems with confidence and determination were truly commendable.



Oxford University Talk

It was great to welcome Luke and Calum from St Edmund's Hall, Oxford University on Tuesday 14th January. Forty of our Year 11 students were able to hear about what to expect around university life in general, what to expect when at university, why they should choose Oxford or Cambridge, University life at Oxford (including the collegiate system and tutoring) and what universities like Oxbridge are looking for in students. It was a really inspirational and engaging talk. Our students also had time to ask questions.

Rotary Club Competition

Earlier this term, we attended a Design & Technology event at Leicester Grammar School in which 36 teams took part in an engineering challenge. The challenge was for teams to design and make a rocket launcher from a set of given materials. They had to make the launcher reach a certain height but also land within a certain area to gain points. We took one group of four Year 9 D & T students to represent the school in the foundation section. They did a fantastic job and came 3rd in their category. Four D & T Year 10 students won the intermediate section after creating a fantastic design and also creating an outstanding portfolio of work explaining their thought process. The event was great fun and a great experience for the students who had the opportunity to work as a team.



Oxford Trip Wednesday 12th March

We took 15 Year 11 students to Oxford University. Students had a talk about the University, met current Year 1 students, had a chance to tour St Edmund's Hall College, were able to ask questions and our students also had a session with the Materials faculty focussing on Solar Cells. We look forward to working with Oxford more in the future including inviting them back in to talk to our students as well as getting out to visit them next academic year. We have attached some pictures from the day.



Careers coffee morning

We invited parents/carers into school to come and meet with Mr Croucher and also Anna Scull (from the Leicester & Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership). Tea and coffee were available and we were able to provide information about careers and Labour Market Information which can help parents /carers have positive and meaningful discussions with young people around the World of Work and possible job opportunities.

Labour market information describes the world of work and how the employment trends are changing. It tells us about the jobs and skills employers are looking for, which industries are set to grow and where the opportunities for promotion and salaries are going to be. Most importantly for young people, LMI covers the future demand - what kind of jobs/sectors will be in demand after leaving school and what sorts of skills will be needed.

The morning was really positive and we are grateful to all parents/carers who took time to come in and meet us.

Year 6 parents coffee morning – 1st April

On 1st April we welcomed nearly 100 parents/carers of our soon to be Year 7 students (current Year 6 students). Tea and coffee was available and SLT were on hand to meet and chat with parents as well as take them around the school. We had 14 amazing Year 7 students help us too. It was a really positive morning and great to meet so many of our new parents/carers.

Tree Planting with SMD – 1st April

SMD invited a number of our students to plant trees on site. We selected students who had already shown interest of working with SMD previously and had engaged with the talks SMD ran with them earlier this academic year. Our students were amazing! It was a really nice way for our students, staff and SMD to celebrate the near completion of our sports hall.



Manor High School Sports Leaders

Many thanks to our Year 9 leaders who expertly helped out at the primary netball tournament held at Manor High School on Tuesday 1st May. Their energy and enthusiasm levels were infectious, with all involved enjoying developing their leadership skills. The tournament was well attended by the local primary schools with lots of impressive skills on display.



Ellis Roberts – year 11 – Under 16 County Champion

Congratulations to Ellis and his Leicester Lions U16 teammates who triumphed in the U16 County Cup. Ellis, who has also been part of the Leicester Tigers Developing Players Programme squad this year, was a key player in the victory, a 32 -14 win against Market Bosworth. Everyone at Manor is excited about keeping an eye on Ellis's development in Rugby, with more success on the horizon.



Futsal

The futsal teams at Manor have enjoyed success this season. Pictured are the girls who finished second overall in South Leicestershire in the Year 9 competition. The Year 7 team remained unbeaten through their campaign, but also finished in second place, the same goal difference but lost out by one on goals scored.



Matilda Smith – Year 7 – National Cross Country

Matilda won the country cross county (Year 8) title and then went on to represent in the National Championships. In the race, held at Stoneleigh Country Park, Matilda finished in 31st place. We are extremely proud of Matilda here at Manor.



IET Faraday Challenge

On the 7th March six Year 8 students were asked to represent the school at the annual IET Faraday Challenge at Thomas Estley Community College. This event provided an exciting opportunity for the Year 8 students to engage in a hands-on engineering challenge, developing their problem-solving, teamwork and creativity skills. Their brief was to produce a device that would support three different age categories for their specific needs. The teams then raced against the clock to solve a real-life engineering problem, putting their engineering and technology knowledge and skills to the test.

The event aims to encourage more young people to study and consider exciting and rewarding careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) by using creativity, innovation and problem-solving skills. We are incredibly proud of these students and represented the school beautifully. The six students have now received an Industrial Cadets Challenger Award for their participation of this event.





Community

The school council had a wonderful visit in March to a local care home to spend time with some of the residents. They read books, played games and absolutely loved doing the puzzles! The children were so respectful and really enjoyed all the conversations and activities that they participated in.



Tree Planting at Manor High

The eco and school council children helped SMD construction to plant trees and hedgerow at Manor High School. The shrubs were all delivered from the Woodland Trust and have been planted around the new Sports Hall.





British Science Week

Year 5 took part in a live lesson where they got to see British astronaut 'Tim Peake'. The children discovered exercising in space is extremely important to ensure muscles and bones are being continuously strengthened.

The children also developed their own nutritious space meal ensuring it contained a balance from all of the five groups: carbohydrates, fruit & vegetables, fats & oils, dairy & alternatives and proteins.

Finally, they learnt the importance of monitoring how hydrated or dehydrated an astronaut is by checking the colour of their urine. Did you know all urine on a space station is recycled into drinkable water?

Science week continued with a visit from STEM ambassador Brian, who held an informative assembly about STEM careers.





The eco council continues to work hard to improve the outdoor environment and biodiversity around school. This is them completing the weeding ready to plant an abundance of wildflower seeds which will not only look beautiful, but encourage important insects like bees and butterflies.

The eco-council have spent some lunchtimes weeding the garden area. We have left it as long as possible so insect larvae have a better chance of survival. We had great fun and discovered the longest earthworm in the world! Before and after photos to follow but plenty more to do!





LOROS Stomp Around Leicester



Woodland Grange is very excited to be part of LOROS' Stomp Around Leicester Art Trail (14 July - 21 September). For 10 weeks, 40 giant elephant sculptures will stampede through Leicester's streets to commemorate LOROS' 40th anniversary, each painted by professional artists. And there will be herds of baby elephants joining them, painted by children in schools and community groups - including us! The baby elephant arrived in late March and has been joining in with lots of activities before painting commenced last week.

NSPCC Number Day

At Woodland Grange we enjoyed having an inclusive maths-inspired fundraising day to support the NCTEM to raise money to fund their vital services such as Childline.

We used this opportunity to spend a day making maths meaningful by highlighting how maths is fun and encouraged our pupils to bring about a positive, 'can-do' attitude towards everything maths!

The pupils and staff took part in a Dress up for Digits Day where they were encouraged to wear an item of clothing linked to a mathematical concept to celebrate our love of maths in our school. Each year group also explored an individual story with a maths theme which was enjoyed by all.

There was so much effort that had gone into the costumes, some children were dressed as dominoes, Numberblocks and even a human calculator! It was great to see a love of maths being shared throughout the school by children and staff.



Code Club have been working with the National Centre for Computing on a project called 'I Belong' all about encouraging girls to pursue computing in KS3, 4 and beyond. They have made posters about what they enjoy about computing.

Tackling the Screendemic

We were delighted to have so many people attend our recent 'Tackling the Screendemic' event at school. The meeting was organised jointly between parents, school and governors following conversations about excessive screen time for children and young people when they are at home.

There were 4 speakers on the night (as detailed on the flyer) each with their own perspective on screen time and online safety. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with families receiving support and advice on such things as correct posture when viewing a screen, considering how much time a child should spend online when they are at home, what content they are accessing and what local and national action is taking place to tackle these issues.

The group are keen to follow this up with further meetings and events to ensure the message continues to be shared.



TACKLING THE SCREENDEMIC

Tackling the risks of social media, smartphones & excessive screen time in children & young people

Thursday 13th February at 7pm at Woodland Grange Primary School

With presentations by:

Dr Sanjiv Nichani OBE: Senior Consultant Paediatrician
Neil O'Brien OBE: MP for Harborough, Oadby & Wigston
Nichelle Samani: Chartered physiotherapist at Oadby House clinic
Gurpreet Mulley: Detective Chief Inspector for Leicestershire Police



Staff and community volunteers – including a team from Santander – have worked tirelessly to create this beautiful 'bee' garden, which will be an amazing bee-friendly space.

British Science Week

On Thursday, 13th March, we celebrated British Science Week with a day full of exciting scientific exploration and creativity. In the lead-up to the event, all students were tasked with conducting their own science investigations at home. They were encouraged to test a hypothesis through an experiment they designed themselves, draw conclusions from their findings, and present their work in a creative way. The highlight of the week was our Science Fair, where students proudly showcased their projects. These were carefully judged, and we are looking forward to the prize-giving and awards ceremony on Monday, 24th March.

The theme for this year's Science Week was "Adapt and Change." We chose to explore this theme by focusing on how humans can adapt and change our behaviour to tackle the climate crisis. To deepen their understanding, students took part in a special afternoon off timetable, where they rotated through a carousel of eco-focused experiments with different teachers. The hands-on activities helped students reflect on the impact of human actions on the environment and inspired them to think of ways to make a positive difference. It was a fantastic week of learning, discovery, and creativity!



The children took part in the annual parallel athletics event organised by the South Leicestershire School Sports Partnership. The School Games provide development opportunities for young people to enjoy taking part in sport and physical activity whilst growing key skills such as confidence, self-belief, and determination.

SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

SCHOOL 2025 COMPETITION



This year we participated in the 'Show Racism The Red Card' national school competition. There were a number of different categories, we chose to focus on the T-Shirt design category.

On 7th March, children designed a paper copy of their T-Shirt and we identified some winners from across the school with a final entry chosen to send off as our school entry. The following week, on 14th March, the children then had the opportunity to bring their design to life with fabric crayons, paints and pens. The children were then able to wear their T-Shirts the following week in school on the 21st March.



Houses of Parliament Visit

At the start of March, Year 6 pupils from Woodland Grange enjoyed a trip to the Houses of Parliament. Following an early start and a very exciting coach trip through central London, they were greeted by the impressive sight of the iconic building, complete with the recently restored Big Ben.

The visit started with a guided tour and pupils followed the footsteps of Kings and Queens by walking the same route that monarchs take during the state opening of Parliament. They learnt about the role of Government, how a bill becomes a law and even saw a debate in the House of Commons! Following this, the Houses of Parliament education team ran a fun and fascinating workshop where students could put their new knowledge to the test, explaining the three parts of Parliament and why not everyone can take a seat in the House of Lords- and many children decided that this is something they would like to aim for!



We're delighted to share with you some fantastic news with you! The school was visited by Ofsted in January and inspectors found the school to be good in all areas. This is a reflection of the hard work and dedication of our staff, pupils, governors and the wider school community. We're sure you'll join us in congratulating everyone involved for their continued commitment to excellence.

Key Highlights from the Ofsted Report:

- **Parent View:** "Overdale Infant School is a family. It is a lovely community." This perfectly captures the supportive and inclusive environment we strive to create.
- **Reading:** "The school has embedded its approach to phonics well. Staff expertly introduce new sounds with precision. The school successfully supports pupils who struggle with learning to read or speak English as an additional language. Staff guide these pupils very well. The school has thoughtfully considered books with cultural diversity. High-quality texts ensure that pupils enjoy reading different authors and poetry through 'book talk' opportunities. Pupils achieve well with reading."
- **Staff:** "The school provides high-quality professional development to staff. Leaders' personalised coaching at every opportunity ensures that staff implement the curriculum well."
- **Pastoral:** "Pastoral support for pupils' well-being is strong."
- **SEND:** "Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The school accurately identifies their needs. Staff skilfully provide clear steps for them, alongside the teacher. Activities are well-selected."

For staff, the results are a testament to their hard work and commitment. "We've worked incredibly hard to create an environment where every child can flourish," said Hayley Holmes, Headteacher. "Seeing that effort reflected in the Ofsted report—and in the smiles of our pupils—is incredibly rewarding."

Pleasure in Pages

Miss Francis attended the Roade English Hub Pleasure in Pages reading conference and met Michael Rosen. Miss Francis shared some of the work from Year 2. They had completed some work inspired by Michael Rosen's Dread Cat. Michael Rosen looked at the children's poetry and character descriptions. He thought the work was amazing and was impressed by the brilliant vocabulary the children had chosen.

PA Bingo

On Friday 28th March the wonderful Overdale Parents' Association held their annual Bingo Night. The night was a resounding success with a range of Bingo games being played for some great prizes. There was also a raffle held on the night seeing families win a variety of Easter egg bundles. We are currently awaiting the outcome of the amount raised from the event and we are already looking forward to the next PA event - everyone loves a cake sale!

New Playground Equipment

Carrying on with the theme of our wonderful PA this term we have had a successful bid for funds to further improve the KS1 outdoor area for the children. The new slide and climbing frame were recently installed and the children are loving the structure. It has made playtimes so much more fun. The school council were instrumental in the decision of the structure having a slide as they were keen to point out the inequality between the Reception and KS1 playground slide count. The slide has also been installed in loving memory of Areez who we lost very suddenly last academic year.



British Science Week

The school focussed on sustainability during British Science Week. The classes all tackled it in a different way. Year 1 listened to a story called Somebody Swallowed Stanley and created posters based on the story's powerful message about Stanley the plastic bag.



Year 2 went on a nature walk and hunted for bugs, exploring the many different habitats that different living creatures occupy. We are very lucky to have such lovely grounds to allow our outdoor learning.



As we approach the Easter break, we want to take a moment to celebrate the wonderful children in our school community. Their kindness, hard work, and respect towards one another have truly brightened our days and made our school a better place for everyone. A huge thank you to all parents and carers for your unwavering support – it plays an essential role in nurturing these values in our children and strengthening our school family. Thank you so much to all of the parents who came along to our Bingo night – it was great to see such a great turn out. Thank you to the Parents' Association who organised this for us. Congratulations also to Addison Macdonald for winning the heat of the Master Chef competition and Max Read for his outstanding achievements in the world of Cross Country. We are so proud! Wishing you all a restful and joyful Easter holiday!

EQUAL ACCESS FOR GIRLS SCHOOL AWARD

It is with great pride to say that Overdale Junior School has been recognised by England Football and Barclay Girls' Football School Partnership for being an "Equal Access School".

This means we are providing equal opportunities in football for both boys and girls. This is a fantastic award to receive as a school. It was also mentioned that, although this is for football specifically, we are widely recognised across the city for our equal opportunities across other sports as well



British Science Week

The school undertook various different activities to recognise British Science Week in March. Year 6 children spent time mapping out our woodland ecosystem and the inhabitants found there, and then designed the ultimate predator! The children had a fab time and it was lovely to use our school grounds and iPads in creative ways.

We also took part in an exciting live lesson, Beyond the Waves. Children explored the fascinating world of marine life, including sharks and manta rays. They discovered a wealth of interesting facts about how these creatures catch their food and navigate their underwater environment.



Meanwhile, year 4 enjoyed making their own hybrid animal with various adaptations to its habitat, and making rockets for a mission to the moon. Year 3 tested out whether the design of something affected how it flew through the air. They made different designs of UFOs, either changing the shape of the plate or adding things to it, before going outside to test how they flew.



On Wednesday 26 March, we took 10 children to Sir Jonathan North Tennis Centre to take part in a range of activities. The focus was to improve their self-confidence and ability to work with each other through tennis. They did a variety of games and skill based activities alongside another school and worked excellently as a team.



Year 3 enjoyed a fantastic trip to the Gurdwara, immersing themselves in Sikh culture. The children were warmly welcomed and gained valuable insights into the significance of the Gurdwara in the Sikh faith. It was a fantastic experience



Leicestershire Junior Chef Competition

The live heats of this competition took place in the Overdale school kitchens. Congratulations to Addison MacDonald for winning the heat.



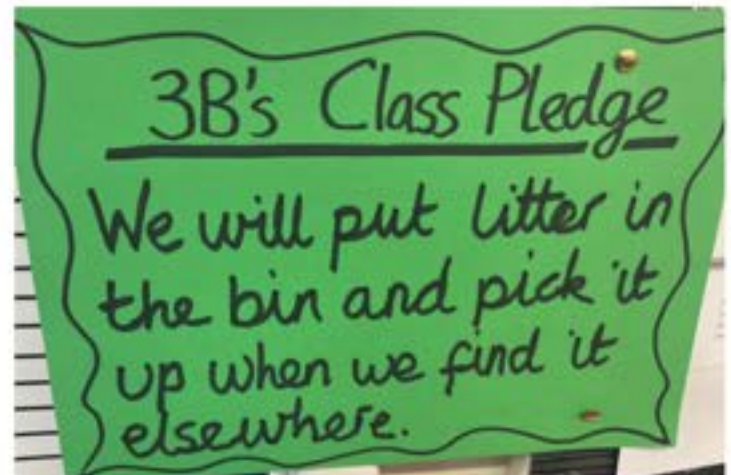
Sustainability

The children have been thinking about small ways that we can make a difference to climate change by making a 'class pledge' linked to being more sustainable. There have been some wonderful ideas shared.

4W decided on a **'book swap' as a class**. This means that they are able to bring in a book that they have enjoyed and are willing to swap for another book of their choice, that someone else in the class has finished with. 6BD pledged to **to turn lights and electronics off when they are not using them**. 3B pledged to **ensure litter is disposed of properly** and have already done their first litter pick!

Class 4TM decided on **'Play outside, rather than sit at a device'** and 4R pledged to **'not to leave the tap running when brushing our teeth'**.

We hope you can help support your child's pledge at home too.



The Parents Association are SO excited to invite you to the 40th Anniversary of the Summer Fete. It is going to be a day of fun and celebration for the Overdale Schools Community and Neighbourhood.

Year 5 children have had a great time completing their Level 1 Bikeability course. Most classes have taken part now and we have further sessions after Easter for those who have not. We are so proud of the children and how hard they have worked. The instructors were so proud of the children and have been given us feedback throughout the week about how responsible and respectful they were. We would like to thank and congratulate each and every child.



This term, Year 6 have been diving into Macbeth, exploring its dramatic themes and powerful language. They have stepped into the minds of key characters, crafting persuasive speeches and reflective diary entries to bring the story to life. Through this, they have developed their writing skills, deepened their understanding of Shakespeare, and had great fun embracing the intrigue and ambition of the play while enjoying using the marvellous amphitheatre in the school grounds.



YOUR TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER SCREEN TIME

'How much is too much screen time for children?'



Birth to 5 years

6 to 10 years

11 to 17 years

Waking up



No screen time between birth - 24 months



Waking up without screens. It is recommended that social media/screens are not used for the first hour of the day



Phones, tablets and computers should not be in any child's bedroom overnight.

Hours per day



2 - 5 year olds no more than 30 mins/day

No screen time between birth - 24 months



'Walk, run, ride a bike, anything that gets kids up, outside and off their screens'

Watching lots of short videos is being linked to concentration difficulties in children.

Leisure

Avoid using a device to settle your child down. Instead try a book, a game outdoors, or just a cuddle

Keep active
'Encourage physical activity, ideally outside, for 1-2 hours'

'Try and ensure screen-free time together'

Stay active. More green time, less screen time

Reports suggest adults touch their phones over 2000 times a day.

Sleep Hygiene

Under 5s should not use a screen at least 2 hours before bedtime

'Bedtime stories are the best and healthiest way to settle your child'



No screens at least 1 hour before bedtime

'Buy an alarm clock so that screens are not in the bedroom'



Accepted by NHS England Mental Health Leads

'Studies have shown a clear link between excessive screen time and issues such as delayed speech and language development, short-sightedness, communication difficulties, reduced concentration spans, poor sleep and mental health problems.'



HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR SAFER SCREENS



SCAN ME



Opportunity

Achievement

Kindness

Follow us on Twitter: Oak Trust @OakMATrust

E: admin@oaktrust.org

T: 0116 303 3721