

Beckfoot Oakbank

November Newsletter



Dear all students, staff, families and community

I hope that this message finds you all well. Just 7 weeks after school reopened for all, it is quite remarkable just what a fantastic community Beckfoot Oakbank is. I would like to share with you some of the highlights.

The way that our students and staff have got to grips with the new way of working in school has been excellent. Life is not easy, but everyone has done their bit and more besides. Students have studied the full subject range as we have kept the curriculum broad. The Risk Assessment rules that are in place have been taken on board by everyone and both students and staff have shaped where tweaks have needed to be made. Who would have thought that a face mask would become part of our daily equipment alongside our pencil cases and calculators? This community has supported one another day in and day out with whatever has come our way.

I have loved seeing and reading about the work that our students are doing from home. The Robot made by a student in Y8 and the English folder of work by a Y11 student both really stick in my mind. It is great that we have been able to start bringing extra-curricular activities back in recent weeks led by the PE department. The celebration assemblies during this last week of term show just how well our Year Teams and their Form Tutors know the students with lots of prizes awarded.

Our new Year 7s feel like they have always been with us and have done so well at settling in and making Beckfoot Oakbank their home. You have had a great half term. Y7, 8 and 9 have completed some assessments to ensure that we know what they do know and what they don't in order for us to catch them up quickly. Y11 are preparing for their mock exams after half term and we all wish them well.

The virtual opening evening and the Transition sessions for current Y6s have been there to allow the wider community to see a little bit of our school remotely. If you haven't already done so have a look at the website. Next half term we will have our sixth form open evening (virtual of course) and we hope that you can take some time to find out about us. Our sixth form results are, for a number of years running, some of the best in the area. The Local School Committee has had its first meeting and I am thrilled that we have a full complement of representatives from our families and the community. Next term we will be starting our Family Engagement Group and are looking forward to meeting and working with some of you, even if remotely.

And so, we look ahead to another half term. I have never felt as proud to be the Headteacher of this great school. What a community.

Best wishes,

Tina Smith, Headteacher



The Quality of Education

It has been great to have students back in the building and engaging with our curriculum and seeing them enjoying lessons. We still have some restrictions on what we can do but the last half term has been great to see students in class and developing their knowledge skills and understanding after such a long period out of school. Teachers continue to develop the use of knowledge organisers to support students' understanding of what each topic / unit of work contains.

I thought that this newsletter would be a good opportunity to explain our overarching approach to the quality of education at Beckfoot Oakbank. You will see the words on our letter heads and within the logo. First and foremost, our students are at the heart of what we do. Their growth and development as young people underpins our approach to the curriculum. As a school we have identified four drivers that are the cornerstones of all of our school improvement strategies.

- Planning for everyone
- Building relationships
- Managing emotions
- Breaking the cycle

They form the golden thread that sets the strategic vision for the school, defines the key foci of the School Improvement Plan and shapes and influences the climate and culture both in and out of school. These drivers will enable us to deliver our commitment to the Trust curriculum expectations which will inspire Beckfoot Oakbank Students to be

- Confident communicators
- Knowledgeable and expert learners
- Committed community contributors
- Future-ready young people

For each of the four drivers we have established what this means to us as a school and in subsequent newsletters we will elaborate on each of these areas.

I am keen to establish a focus group of parents keen to work with us on how we communicate information about the curriculum and what students are learning and the information that you as families receive. If you would be interested in being part of such a group please drop me an email at

lhart@beckfootoakbank.org.

Mrs Hart

Associate Headteacher



Library/LRC News



It's been a funny start to the year, but the Click and Deliver book lending is working! Just head over to the library app at

<http://lib.oakbank.org.uk/>

and sign in with your F or oak number, without the F or OAK, and you can reserve books to borrow, renew books, and write book reviews. You can also see all the information and news we put on our front page! *Don't forget to return your books from last year first though!!*



If you prefer to read on a phone or tablet, we've got options for you there too. Go to

<https://beckfootoakbank.eplatform.co/>

and this time sign in with your email address and usual school password, or you can download the app to your phone or tablet. You can then borrow eBooks to read anytime, anywhere – except in lessons of course!

Finally, you can now find us on Instagram!



If you're 13+, follow us on Instagram at **oakbanklrc** for all the latest library updates, news, and titles to support you through the school year!

From Ms King & Miss Lund

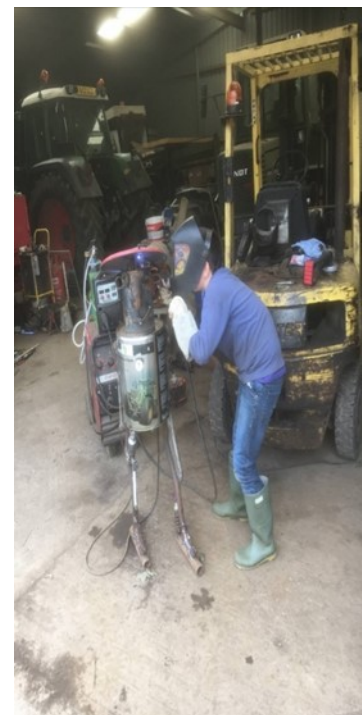
Teaching and Learning Update

It has been a busy and exciting half-term for staff as we have focused on developing our understanding of how cognitive load, or how much learning the brain can hold, affects how our students learn. As a result staff have been developing strategies that make it easier for students to learn, such as dual-coding and chunking work down into more manageable sections. We have also started work on 'modelling', where teachers not only show students what a great answer looks like, but they talk through how it is written and what is included. This will remain the focus in the classroom over the next half-term up until Christmas. We have also shared some great practice on how students can retain their learning through recall activities, as well as setting up our Teaching & Learning Development Group with the remit to research further areas of effective teaching practice. There has also been the challenge of delivering lessons online, which teachers have risen to magnificently as they develop new skills around the technology needed. As a school we are looking forward to the next steps in improving teaching and learning at Beckfoot Oakbank.

Mr Steve Hardacre - Deputy Headteacher (Teaching & Learning)

Home Learning

Thank you so much for supporting your child to complete their home learning tasks this half term. Completing home learning is one of our student absolutes and we have been able to reward hundreds of positive stamps for home learning over the last 6 weeks- well done Year 7! Our Year Team Leaders have given out prizes and mentions during our Rewards Assemblies this week which has been wonderful to see. Completing home learning tasks will help your child to become a fantastic independent learner so please encourage them to check Microsoft Teams and keep up to date with all their tasks. We look forward to seeing their fantastic work next half term too.



No Child Left Behind

The Tutor Programme

This half term we have seen our tutors start to build positive relationships with their students. Year 7 tutors have been making phone calls home to check that students have settled in to life at Secondary school. This will continue through into the next half term.

We started The Aspirations Programme in week 4 after the induction week and bridging unit covering health and wellbeing. This has been really positive for the students and has allowed them to start exploring aspects of careers whilst developing their soft skills to make them future ready. We have had some student voice collected through our votes for schools that as a school we will start to work on. Next half term the tutors will be continuing to teach The Aspirations Programme and promoting our brand new Student Leadership strategy that we wrote to you about in October.

Mr Coombes
Assistant Headteacher

Personal Development

Resilience, determination and adaptability are just three of some of the many characteristics that we have seen in abundance from our pupils this last half term. It has been great to see these important traits develop in our pupils and we know that it will be the continued personal development of these skills that will serve the pupils well in later life alongside their academic achievements.

As mentioned previously, it is crucially important to us here at Beckfoot Oakbank that our curriculum and out of classroom experience drives our pupils toward becoming responsible citizens, fully prepared to live happy and successful lives; with pupils continually working on becoming confident communicators, knowledgeable and expert learners, committed community contributors and future ready young people.

Pupils have really enjoyed and progressed well in their Open minds lessons to date which have covered a wide-range of topics across the different year groups including 'what prejudice do people face?' and 'What are our British cultures and beliefs?'. I know you'll agree with me in recognising that participation in sessions of this nature will enable our pupils to become broad-minded, responsible citizens.

Mr Ray
Deputy Headteacher



Climate: Rewards in half-term 1

This term has been a fantastic success in so many ways for so many of our students. Staff have been using Class Charts to reward students when they are doing it right in lessons and around school, which has resulted in a staggering **196,123** positive points awarded. We also use Class Charts to record negative points when students are not meeting our Student Absolutes, but the brilliant fact about last half-term is that 96% of all points recorded were positive - we are so proud of our students! It is also really exciting that many of our students are moving quickly towards the first Student Leadership milestone of 500 positive points, at which point they will have earned the opportunity to join a leadership committee and begin shaping our school community.

Climate: Attendance in half-term 1

Even though we are in the middle of a pandemic, which has made life different (and at times really difficult) for everyone - staff, students and families - we are still so proud of our students for their attendance last term. Yes, there were times when individual students and even year groups were having to self-isolate, but students still managed to earn impressive numbers of weekly 100% attendance awards - 6,754 in total. It is wonderful that so many families are supporting the drive for excellent attendance, as it is crucial to students feeling happy, secure and enjoying success at school.

Don't forget that any student who manages to keep their positive ratio above 90%, and maintain excellent attendance (97% or above, not including Covid-related absence) this term, will be able to access the Christmas movie reward in the final week. Good luck everyone!

Mr Hopkins
Assistant Headteacher

Transition

2020 2021

Our year 6 into year 7 transition team have really enjoyed working with students and parents over last half term to let them know what fantastic opportunities there are for them here at Beckfoot Oakbank School.

The program of transition events started on the 17th September 2020 with our first ever virtual open evening including a presentation by our Headteacher Miss Smith. In this she explained the Strategic Vision and Golden Thread for all of our students that help us to ensure no child is left behind.

Subject teachers facilitated some virtual activities for students to get a taster of their subjects and there is a video that highlights some of the extra-curricular opportunities available at the school.

Mrs Tomlinson-Askham and Miss Rhodes wrote a letter introducing themselves and then had a great time in their specially themed office talking to students in their primary classes about what the school has to offer and the support that they can give. They have also made a "magical" video to introduce the school. If you have not yet seen this I would highly recommend a watch!

Here is the link <http://www.oakbank.org.uk/virtual-open-evening/>

Mrs Webber
Assistant Headteacher

Year 7 Update

What a truly marvellous start Year 7 have made. They have met their new tutors and subject teachers, made new friends, sat through tests, adapted amazingly to the Covid restrictions. I feel such a lucky Head of Year having to work with such a wonderful set of students every single day. I get to find out about all the great things they have been getting up to not to mention some of the things that get them angry and upset.

Keep working hard and keep smiling my lovely year 7's you are true superstars can't wait to see what this term brings. Shine Bright!

Miss Whitehead and Mrs Turner

Student Wellbeing

The return to school following lockdown has been a very positive experience for the vast majority of our students. The structure that school days provide, the new learning opportunities and the much missed opportunities for interaction (albeit socially distanced) with people who know and understand how we as students and staff have been feeling, has been greatly welcomed.

The Wellbeing Team have been working hard to support those students who have found the period of lockdown and the return to school life more challenging. Following the Wellbeing surveys completed by all students in September, just over 300 have received 1 to 1 meetings and follow up time as required and this process will continue. Also our external partners are now back helping students too, as the COVID situation permits. School have facilitated ongoing phone consultations for our students with the RELATE counsellor, Barnardo's support team and Bradford Children's Services for those families with Social Care involvement. Socially distanced appointments are back underway with the School Nurse and the Safer Schools Police Team. Helen Mawer, our experienced Family Support Worker is out daily, supporting both our young people and their parents, in the community, with difficulties they are facing. Supporting students' mental and physical wellbeing never stops for any school but we have made positive and appreciated steps forward in this first half term.

Mr Shearn
Wellbeing Co-ordinator