

Welcome from the Principal



Our long-awaited Christmas break is finally here! The end of the year is often a good time to reflect and as I read through this edition of the newsletter, I feel proud of the many ways our staff and students continue to go above and beyond. Fundraising, donations, the school show, and various celebration events are just some of the ways that members of the OBA family have dared to shine this term.

In times of increasing hardships, it is heart-warming to read so much positivity and I hope, like me, this edition puts a smile on your face too.

School will be closed throughout the Christmas period, but our emails will be monitored at regular intervals should you have any issues that you need to raise. The email address is admin@ob-ac.co.uk. Advice lines and emergency contact numbers for external agencies and support services can also be found on our school website and social media accounts.

I wish you all a very happy and safe break with your families and loved ones.

Mrs Evans
Principal

Key Dates

- 4th January - School re-opens after the Christmas break
- 12th January - Year 12 and 13 progress Evening
- 26th January - Year 9 Progress Evening
- 7th February - Year 11 Photos
- 20th-24th February - Half Term

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Lifeguard Qualifications

A big well done to Louis Marron and Lewin Nickson who have recently completed their lifeguarding course at Brookvale Recreation Center. This course was organised, and partly funded, by the academy and the boys worked very hard to complete the course. They both now have lifeguarding jobs because of their successful completion of this qualification.



Youth Sport Trust

The academy's trained Sports Leaders have led their first Youth Sport Trust 'I have the power' project session.

Sports leaders planned and led 13 year 7 students in activities designed to build friendships and foster a sense of belonging, self-belief, resilience, and cooperation.

Miss Mc Auliffe, Head of Pe, commented that, "Students and leaders walked out of the session very happy and looking forward to the next session."

Activities included:

1. TEAMWORK

Stay on the bench but organise yourself in alphabetical order without coming off the bench.

2. PROBLEM SOLVING

Get the ball to the other side using drain pipes.

3. COMMUNICATION

'Spiderball' - in a circle use names, interesting parts of their life and sequences to pass the ball.

4. LISTENING

Move and Match - students dance around to music and when a leader shouted a category (hair colour, eye colour etc) students had to run to someone with that colour.

5. ACTIVE

Pass the hoop - in a circle holding hands, the group must get everyone through the hoop in the fastest possible time.

MMA IN PE!



PE students studying Mixed Martial Arts have benefitted from the expertise of a qualified MMA instructor. Simon from Foundation MA visited OBA over a 6-week period to develop new foundation movement with our students and to improve their knowledge of how to protect themselves, build resilience, manage anger, increase concentration, and instill will power.

Miss Mc Aulliffe, Head of Pe, said “It has been exciting for students to have the opportunity to do MMA in school and they have absolutely loved the sessions!”

Sports Trip to Edge Hill University

On Wednesday 9th November students from Years 11, 12 and 13 students went to Edge Hill University to explore their career options and courses for a future in Sport. On arrival students were given a tour of the site and facilities before experiencing a lecture about the courses on offer at Edge Hill and how to apply for them.

Students were fortunate to then have the chance to participate in two university sessions on the following courses - Sports Management, Sports and Exercise Science, PE and School Sport, Sports Therapy and Sports Coaching.

Mr King, PE teacher commented that, "Sessions were interactive and full of information. It was a beneficial and memorable day for all the students."



Into Film

Media studies student, Owen Mainwaring recently secured a place with The Film Academy to write and produce a short film. Owen completed the application form using his own initiative and successfully gained a place on the highly sought-after programme.

Following an intense 7 hour zoom meeting which involved hearing from previous candidates on the course, Owen and peers were invited to The Story House in Chester. Students pitched ideas and Owen's synopsis about an actor in a play who was in competition with another actor who tried to kill him, making him

hallucinate and go insane, was successful in being taken forward to production.

Following sessions involved developing the script which Owen described as being really exciting.

On the filming day, Owen was assigned the role of cinematographer. He commented that this was a surprise because it was a 360 camera so he downloaded an app on his phone and managed everything from there!

The following 2 days involved the whole team contributing to editing the film which would be



watched via a VR headset.

The experience culminated in Owen's friends and family being invited to watch a premiere of the film in the Story House on the 13th December.

What a fantastic opportunity - well done Owen!

Mr Smyth's Art Work Displayed as Part of Popular Exhibition



Art teacher and Artist Mr Smyth, in collaboration with Photographer, Lee Harrison and SSE Plc have been working on an ambitious project to record the iconic station Fiddle's Ferry PowerStation before the closure in March 2020. The aim of the project is to create a visual historical archive for future generations to see the power station in full operation through to the site being decommissioned. Mr Smyth said, **"It has been a privilege to have been granted exclusive access to all areas within the powerstation working collaboratively with Lee and SSE plc to record the inner life of the station, exploring different aspects of Fiddlers from a series of vantage points and locations. I am proud to be able to artistically preserve the stations industrial heritage"**.

Their widely acclaimed work titled 'The Cloud Factory: End of an Era' has recently been on display as part of The Fiddlers Ferry Exhibition at Warrington Museum and was hugely popular. Although this has now ended, a snapshot of the amazing documentation pieces can be viewed at - The Cloud Factory - Fiddlers Ferry Power Station - YouTube which depicts a short overview of the exhibition.

Mr Smyth and Lee will continue to document the next phase of the Powerstations life, demolition, regeneration and rebirth which will result in the second of 3 exhibitions planned soon.

As an academy we are hugely proud of Mr Smyth's achievements and look forward to seeing his work on display again as the next phase progresses.

Congratulations Mr Smyth!



Celebration Eve at OBA



OBA was delighted to host a special celebration event to recognise our student's ongoing hard work.

Award winners were invited to attend the glitzy ceremony, along with their families, to receive their certificates and prizes at the academy. Balloons, dressed tables, tea light candles and cake stands laden with treats helped to transform the dance and drama theatre into a glamorous setting for the second year of prestigious celebrations.

Students from last year's Year 11 and 13 cohorts had been nominated by teaching staff for awards including Highest Achiever, Subject Awards and Attendance. Trophy awards were also given to celebrate the best Progress 8 score and the highest-ranking grades across the year group.

Special congratulations went to **Jack Highton in Year 11** who scooped both of these accolades. Jack was praised by staff members

for consistently working hard and pushing himself to get high grades. Alongside this, he supported his peers and attended enrichment sessions after school every week.

Additional nominations were made for students who had persisted and succeeded in the face of adversity and special 'Perseverance' awards were given to commend these efforts, including to **Chantelle O'Neill Kelly in Year 11** and **Engy Hamido-Desouki in Year 13** for their achievements.

Chantelle was praised for her hard work and determination to succeed despite having to overcome several challenging situations.

Engy was described as a diligent and conscientious student who always goes above and beyond to achieve the best possible outcomes. Engy has taken on a range of additional qualifications to secure her place at university, and she is the first person from OBA to go on to study a degree in Medicine.

The academy was honored as part of the celebrations to grant **Ruby Bramwell and Ben Kavanagh** with awards in memory of Miss Clarke, a much loved and missed OBA colleague and teacher. The academy has thanked Miss Clarke's family who sponsored the 'Outstanding Science' award trophies and reward vouchers for the second year running.

Principal, Mrs Evans, said:

"It was a real pleasure to welcome students and their families back into the academy to celebrate their hard work and commitment. I have been impressed by so many of these students over the past couple of years, watching them deal maturely with the demands of their GCSE and A Level courses' whilst managing to adapt and persevere when challenges came their way.

Congratulations to all our award recipients - the OBA family is extremely proud of each one of you."





OBA's Food Bank Challenge Supports Local Community.



In the weeks running up to the Christmas season, students and staff across school have rallied around to gather much-needed supplies to support the local Runcorn Foodbank.

The local foodbank has been in desperate need of stocks for Christmas and this year. Along with the usual non-perishable items, they also expressed a real need for hygiene products, pet food and puddings, and with the support of Maths Teacher Mark Robinson, who organised a fun inter-form group competition, the academy met the requirements head on.

Mr Robinson challenged each form group to have their own collection, with a free hot breakfast on offer for the form bringing in the most items.

Students across the academy, supported the drive and over a six-week period thousands of items were brought into school. Form 7CME, whose tutor is Mr

Milne, managed an amazing collection of over 700 items with form 7E, headed up by Mr Mercer, coming a very close second.

The winning forms were treated to a group breakfast for their magnificent efforts, but the school is extremely proud of all their students for getting involved and embracing the opportunity. Mr Robinson will be handing over the collection to the community hamper project and Runcorn foodbank in time for Christmas, on behalf of the academy.

Discussing the impressive charitable efforts, Mark Robinson said:

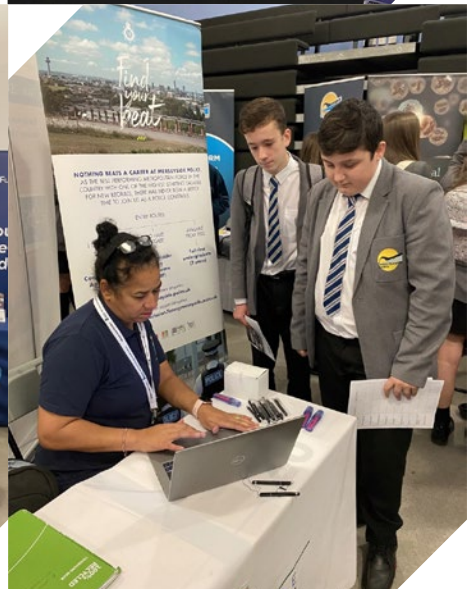
“I’m thrilled with the response to the competition and amazed at the lengths the staff and students have gone to in order to support their local community. As a school we are delighted to have been able to make such a significant contribution to those in our area who need it the most.”

OBA Careers Convention

On Thursday 8th December OBA students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 attended an exciting careers convention here at the academy. Students had the opportunity to meet and chat to representatives from a wide variety of employers, colleges, universities, apprenticeship providers and other post-16 and post-18 opportunities. Over 30 exhibitors attended, representing professions including the creative industries, land-based careers, engineering, the chemical industry, travel, and the armed forces, along with apprenticeship and T-Level providers who are currently recruiting.

Mr Oakes, Assistant Principal, Responsible for Personal Development, said, “The convention was a brilliant opportunity for students to find out more about a variety of careers they may be interested in. Students were advised beforehand of who would be attending the event and spent some time the day prior thinking about who they may want to talk to and what questions they could ask. I was really impressed on the day by the way students interacted with our external guests and many of the employers took the time to comment on how much they had enjoyed speaking with our learners.”

OBA is committed to preparing our students for their next steps. Our careers convention, alongside our career’s education in Lessons for Life, one-to-one interviews with our career’s advisors, visits from employers and colleges and online support at www.oba-careers.co.uk, provides our learners with all the information they need to make thoroughly informed choices about their future.



Xmas Jumper Day

Christmas cheer was spread across the academy as staff and students joined in celebrating National Christmas Jumper Day. The annual initiative was held this year on Thursday 8th December and some fabulously festive jumpers could be seen in the school corridors! A great effort from the OBA family meant that just under £300 was raised on the day to donate to our neighbours, Halton Haven Hospice.



Christmas Carol Singing

Music students from Year 7 have been getting in the Christmas spirit this term with some community carol singing!

Alongside, Mr Tallant, Head of Music at OBA, students have been excited to visit Asda, Runcorn Shopping City, Halton Haven Hospice and Beechcroft Nursing home after rehearsing each week in their lessons.

Students did OBA proud and parents/carers, residents and members of the public who came to

watch all commented on how much they enjoyed the performances.

Mr Tallant, said "I am proud of our year 7's who have made a fantastic start towards studying Music at OBA. Performing in public takes a lot of courage which all our students displayed whilst having some fun! They certainly brought a lot of Christmas cheer and successfully raised well over £100 for Halton Haven Hospice. Well done all!"

Year 8 Maths classes go head-to-head!

A math's riddle competition between two top set classes in Year 8 took place on Thursday 8th December. Maths teacher, Mrs Shah commented, "There were some contentious decisions, plenty of arguing, emotions were high, and a lot of fun was had!"

Congratulations to the winners!

Ellie May Hughes

Abigail Kelly

Safia Mason

Harry Marshall

Mark Adkins



Welcome to our OBA Repair Shop!

HOLD UP!
A little bit of magic has arrived just in time for Christmas!

We are offering an exclusive uniform repair service for all those niggly popped off buttons, fiddly zips, ripped pockets and bits of taking up or in.

This isn't an extensive list but if your uniform needs fixing up, pop along to Miss Holmes for more information.



This term the academy launched the first installment of its 'OBA Repair Shop'. The brand-new initiative, set up by Miss Holmes, helps to repair and alter garments of students clothing to make them for for purpose again. Supported by her mum, Mrs Holmes, a seamstress with over 45 years' experience, Miss Holmes encouraged students to drop off any items of clothing that need some TLC. Alterations included fixing buttons and zips, taking hems up, repairing blazer pockets and re-sewing ties.

The repair shop will be back in the new year so keep hold of anything that needs stitching and keep an eye on our social media channels for new dates.



Primary students brave the cold for OBA show



75 year 5 pupils braved the subzero temperatures in the penultimate week of term to make it the matinee performance of our annual school show. This year the cast presented 'A little Shop of Horrors' and in addition to being wowed with our students' fantastic performances, Year 5 were enthralled by the show's enormous human-gobbling plant!

Pupils and staff from Brookvale Primary School, Murdishaw West Primary School and Windmill Hill Primary school started their visit to OBA with some

hot drinks and food in the canteen after arriving at the academy in -5 conditions!

Following breakfast, pupils from the 3 local schools were treated to a sneak preview of the show ahead of its opening night performance to parents/carers and friends of OBA. A live Q&A session with the cast and directors also allowed pupils to find out more information about the logistics of the show and the special effects they had just seen. Everyone wanted to know who was in the plant!

Little Shop of Horrors



On Monday 12th, Tuesday 13th and Wednesday 14th December OBA students put on dazzling performances of 'Little Shop of Horrors'. The pupils' hard work and dedication shone through as they nailed all the lines and hit every note perfectly.

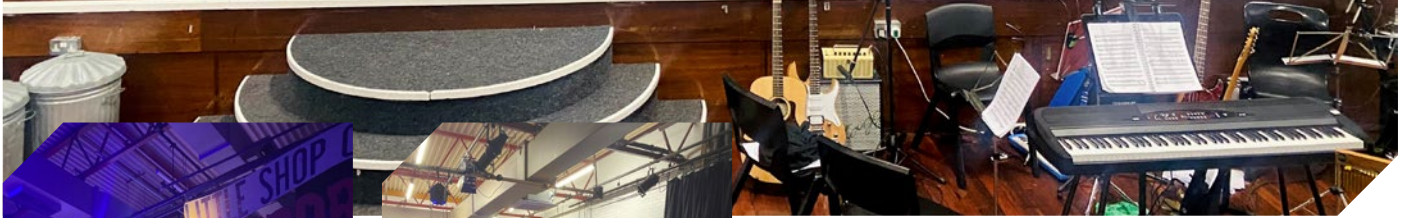
Mrs Quinn, Director commented, "As always, I could not be prouder of all that the students have achieved being part of the "Little Shop of Horrors" cast, band and crew. They have all worked tirelessly for months rehearsing late into the evening 3 nights a week to polish and perfect every song and dance number as well as nailing every scene change and cue. As they

say in show business; The show must go on and it most definitely has regardless of the students and staff facing some challenges not to mention the weather! Every year the students out do themselves and they should give themselves a massive pat on the back because they thoroughly deserve it, well done everyone!

That just leaves me to say THANK YOU to everyone who made it possible; firstly, our site and maintenance staff for all their support especially out of hours, the canteen staff for providing refreshments during the interval, cleaning staff for ensuring everywhere was gleaming, staff who

assisted with front of house each night, all the parents/carers and audience who attended each night even in the icy weather conditions and last but by no means least my amazing Performing Arts colleagues who, without them I would be lost; Mrs Foulder - Co Director, Ms Power - Choreographer, Mr Tallant & Mrs Cathcart - Musical Directors... you are all AMAZING the best team ever!"

The audiences were really impressed with the performances often mentioning how professional the production was. We want to say a big congratulations to everyone involved in the show - you dared to shine and were all stars!



OBA Winter Warmer Project

For the past month, Staff and students across the academy have been donating items for our annual community 'Winter Warmer' initiative. Thank you to everyone who has contributed - by giving a little, together we really have achieved a lot! The 40 packaged food hampers and toys/gifts will now be distributed to families, both in our school and local community, over the Christmas period.

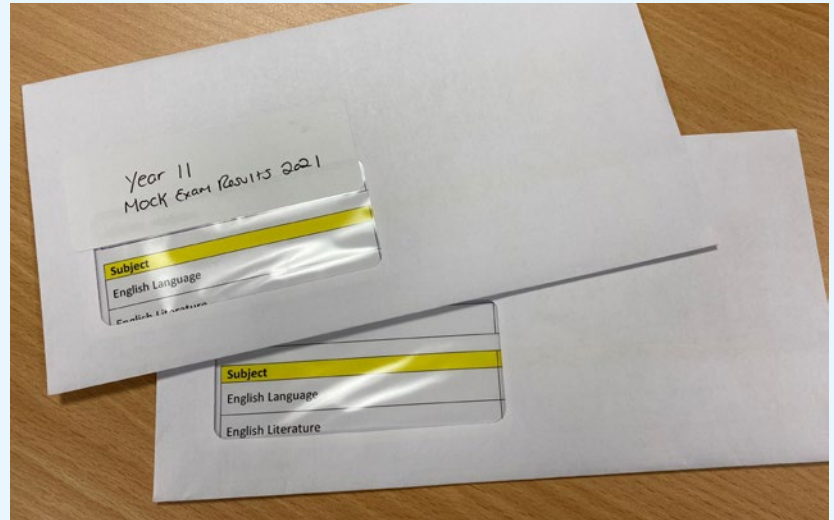
Thank you to everyone who has made this initiative a success!

- £280 donations made via the School Gateway
- £100 Vouchers from Aldi
- £200 of snacks and Aldi vouchers from Mrs..... Year 6 teacher at St Martins on behalf of her family's businesses - Prestige Auto repairs and Campbell Sports Media.
- Food bank donations from school collection organised by Mr Robinson
- Food donations from Supporting living on Halton Road.
- Donations from staff (gifts and food from Abbi Fenner and Victoria Ryan in particular)
- A selection of gifts, toys, selection boxes, chocolates from a collection organised by Jane Rostance.
- Hamper



Year 11 Mock Results

Following a week of mock exams in November, Year 11 students took part in a mock results day which mimicked the official results process. All Students took part in an assembly with Mr Evans and Miss Fitzgerald, Assistant Principal responsible for progress at the academy, which addressed feelings and emotions after the results along with next steps. After the assembly students went back to lesson to fill in a reflection sheet which will be discussed with academic mentors in the new year. All Year 11 students have an allocated academic mentor to help guide them through the potential stresses and strains of the final year. For more details on this, please contact Mrs Hasty - n.hasty@ob-ac.co.uk



It's a Tie!

The Autumn term house competition was very closely fought out by two houses this year. Last year's champions Orion slipped to bottom place just behind Pegasus, leaving Draco and Ursa to battle for top spot, after months of competitions including star points, attendance, sports, countdown and the famous bake off the two houses couldn't be split, resulting in our first ever tied competitor Well done Draco and Ursa!



Reward week at OBA

The penultimate week of term was rewards week at the academy with every year group celebrating success in their year group assemblies. Each assembly was started by Mrs Evans and then Heads of Year, Pastoral Managers and Form Tutors took over to deliver the certificate and voucher rewards. Two students per each subject received an academic award along with rewards for 100% attendance and a special tutor and head of year nomination. Mrs Evans said, **“It was fantastic to have the opportunity to reward so many wonderful achievements. The vast number of students nominated for awards this term really reflects how many of our students are embracing the academy motto and really daring to shine. Congratulations to all students who received an award or got a mention – your efforts are being noticed and appreciated.”**



Parent View

Parent View We are always looking to gather parent voice and one of the ways we do this is using the Ofsted 'Parent View' survey. If you have a couple of minutes spare we would be grateful if you could please click on this link to complete a short questionnaire - [Welcome to Ofsted Parent View | Ofsted Parent View](#) Your time and views are very much appreciated.

Pupil Premium Report The Pupil Premium Spend Strategy 2021 has been published on our website (Click here to view) we welcome any feedback; this can be sent to Mrs Fitzgerald c.fitzgerald@ob-ac.co.uk



a E-Safety Update

For children and adults alike, group chats can provide a very useful way of keeping in touch. However, group chats are also often the cause of digital safeguarding concerns. To raise

awareness of the risks and dangers of group chats, please see below a summary of group chat risks and dangers which has been produced by our partners at National Online Safety.

Should you require any further advice or support with online safety please contact our Digital Safeguarding Coordinator Mr Hussey - l.hussey@ob-ac.co.uk

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Sources: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/l13/lets-talk-about/keeping-online/group-chats/> | <https://www.nos.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Welcome and Goodbyes

The following members of staff will be joining the academy from January 2022 and we are delighted to welcome them to our OBA Family;

Miss Smith	Cover Supervisor
Miss Melia	Pastoral Manager
Mrs Vichos	Pastoral Manager
Mr Houslay	Teacher of Science
Miss Gentry	Teaching Assistant
Miss Smith	Cover Supervisor

We would also like to say thank you and good luck to the following members of staff who leave the academy this term for pastures new:

Miss Greenwood	IZONE Coordinator
Miss Hicklin	Teacher of English
Mr Kendrick	Teacher of Science
Mr Milne	Teacher of IT and Computer Science
Mrs Taylor-Edwards	Teacher of English
Miss Walsh	Teacher of English
Mr Kelley	Cleaner

New Arrivals



On Monday 3rd October Mr Hussey and his partner welcomed their beautiful baby boy, Jamie Anthony Hussey weighing 8lbs and 8oz. Congratulations!



Congratulations to Ms Clemencon and her partner who welcomed their gorgeous baby boy, Jordan Clemencon Finnigan.



Another congratulations to Mr Crawley and his wife on the early arrival of their super cute baby boy Finlay Crawley, born on the 11th November, weighing a dinky 4lb 6oz!

FIT 4 LIFE

HAS GONE DIGITAL!



Who is it for? This programme is for parents/carers of children aged 4-13 years who want to make healthier lifestyle choices, grow in to a healthy weight, get more active, sleep better, feel more energetic and generally feel healthier!

How to get started:

- ▶ Download the app from Google Play or the App Store (scan the QR code to go directly to the store)
- ▶ Sign up using the invite ID **OBA**



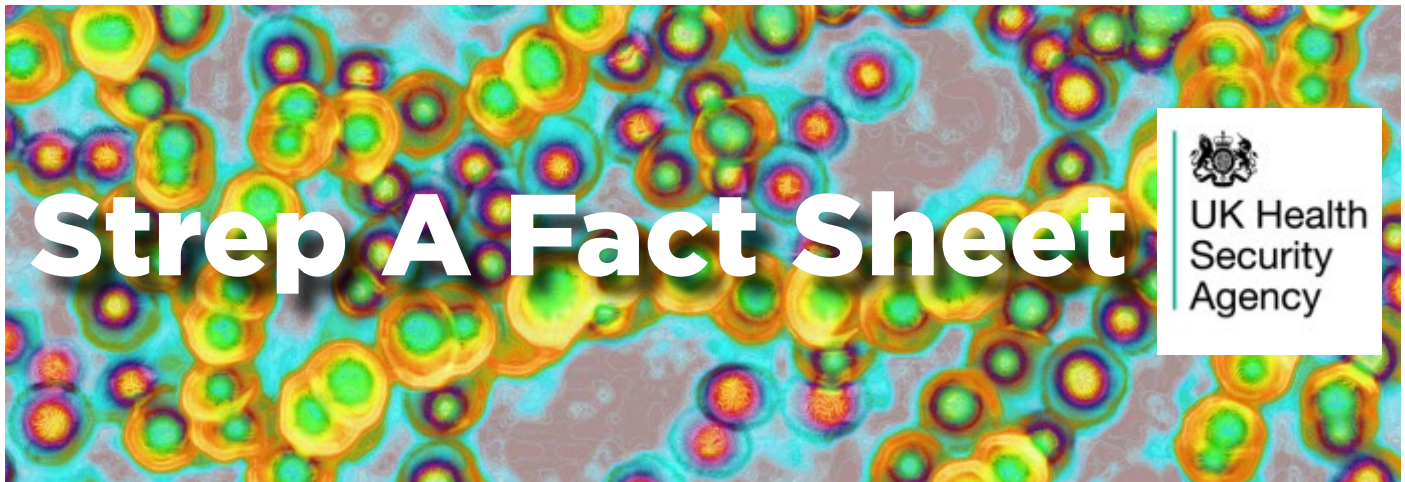
Your coach will be in touch and you will get:

- ▶ Regular content, videos and tips
- ▶ Weekly updates with your coach via the app

The app lets you work towards your own family goals, at your own pace and when it suits you.

To find out more, call Halton Health Improvement Team
0300 029 0029 or email HIT@halton.gov.uk





Fact sheet for schools and parents about Group A Streptococcus (GAS)/Scarlet Fever.

What is Group A Streptococcus?

Group A Streptococcus or Streptococcus pyogenes is a bacterium that can be found in the throat and on the skin. People may carry it and have no symptoms of illness or may develop infection.

How is it spread?

Group A Streptococcus survives in throats and on skin for long enough to allow easy spread between people through sneezing and skin contact. People who are currently carrying the bacteria in the throat or on the skin may have symptoms of illness or they may have no symptoms and feel fine. In both cases, these bacteria can be passed on to others.

What kinds of illnesses are caused by Group A Streptococcus?

Most Group A Streptococcus illnesses are relatively mild, with symptoms including a sore throat ("strep throat"), scarlet fever or a skin infection such as impetigo. However, on rare occasions, these bacteria can cause other severe and sometimes life-threatening diseases. Although scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, it should be treated with antibiotics to minimise the risk of complications and reduce the spread to others.

The symptoms of scarlet fever include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. This is followed by a fine red rash which typically first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. On more darkly pigmented skin, the scarlet rash may be harder to spot, but it will still feel like 'sandpaper'. The face can be flushed red but pale around the mouth. Children who have had chickenpox or influenza ('flu) recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents should remain vigilant for symptoms such as a persistent high fever, cellulitis (skin infection) and arthritis (joint pain and swelling). If you are concerned for any reason please seek medical assistance immediately.

What is invasive Group A Streptococcal (iGAS) disease?

Although rare, invasive Group A Streptococcus disease may occur when bacteria get into parts of the body where bacteria are not usually found. These infections are called invasive Group A Streptococcal disease and can be very serious and even life-threatening.

What are the symptoms of invasive Group A Streptococcal disease?

The most important thing to be aware of are the early signs and symptoms of invasive Group A

Streptococcal disease.

These are:

- High Fever
- Severe muscle aches
- Localised muscle tenderness
- Redness at the site of a wound

What should I do if my child becomes unwell?

If your child becomes unwell contact your GP practice. Alternatively, you can call NHS111 and you should also call NHS111 if your surgery is closed.

If my child is unwell, should they stay off school?

If your child becomes unwell with these symptoms you should contact your GP practice or call NHS111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice. If your child is unwell they should stay off school until they are better.

What else can I do to prevent my child from becoming unwell?

Because Group A Streptococcal disease is spread through coughing, sneezing and skin contact, it's important to have good hand hygiene and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues and throw these away. If you are unwell, stay at home and seek medical advice. This will all help limit the spread of other infections, which are common this time of year