# NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2020



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#### **Group Principal's Message**

Well what a year that was!

Looking back through this Autumn Term Newsletter, I'm delighted that we were able to provide so many additional activities for the children in all of the schools despite the raft of Covid measures we had to introduce to keep everybody safe. We tried our best to keep as many Christmas events going as we could to preserve some semblance of normality, even if they had to take on slightly different formats. The children did seem to enjoy them so they were definitely worthwhile.

You will see throughout this Newsletter that life within the Oak-Tree Group is not just about the classroom curriculum. Of course, our schools are busy places filled with happy children and purposeful learning. However, we offer so many opportunities to enrich our pupils' experiences and I hope that these will form some of their more important memories rather than the need to socially distance, stay in bubbles, and minimise contact with those around them.

Thank you all for your continuing support as we navigate the current lockdown and the government's ever-changing guidelines. Roll on the much anticipated restart...

With best wishes

Mother Hagge

Matthew Hagger

# Normanhurst House Music Competition

This year, Normanhurst's annual House Music Competition went virtual with a dance competition between Connaught and Warren House.

In their bubbles, pupils had lots of fun showing off their fantastic dance moves! It was a very close call... take a look at the competition here.



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#### **Hot Chocolate Fridays**

At the start of the Autumn Term, Miss Barnard introduced a new initiative to Coopersale Hall called 'Hot Chocolate Friday Awards'. This has been a novel way for Miss Barnard to learn more about both the pupils and the school, finding out why the children enjoy Coopersale Hall so much and what could be done to make it even better. Staff nominate pupils weekly as a reward for displaying excellent behaviour, manners or kindness. It's safe to say these awards have been a massive hit with all the pupils!









# March Virtual Open Events 2021

#### **Coopersale Hall School**

Tuesday 2 March at 9:30am

#### **Braeside School**

Wednesday 3 March

Early Years - 9.30am

Infants, Juniors and Seniors - 10.30am

#### **Normanhurst School**

Friday 5 March at 9:30am

Early Years - 9.30am

Infants, Juniors and Seniors - 10.30am

#### **Oaklands School**

Thursday 4 March at 9:30am

#### **Fantastic GCSE Results**



Once again, pupils at both Braeside and Normanhurst School celebrated an excellent set of GCSE results over the summer.

At Normanhurst, half of grades were grades 7-9 and over 99% were passes. Pupils achieved particularly well in English, Modern Foreign Languages, Biology, Chemistry and Physics with 100% passes.

At Braeside, 96% of grades achieved were grade 4 or above, with 49% of grades at grade 7-9. This included 100% passes in English, Maths, Science, French, Spanish and Art.

We are so proud of all Year 11 pupils

for remaining positive and dedicated to their work during a turbulent few months and wish them well in the next stage of their education.







#### **Black History Month**

During October, Normanhurst pupils completed some important learning and activities during their lessons to highlight and celebrate the achievements of the black community.

To launch the month, a special assembly was held to explain to pupils what Black History Month is and why it is celebrated. Pupils were also introduced to some key figures who they would learn more about it class.

Early Years pupils were given the inventor of the traffic light, Garrett Morgan, to research. They enjoyed finding lots of creative ways to make



traffic lights, linking the learning to colours, sequencing and road safety.

Year 1 learned about Sarah Boone, who invented the improved ironing board, and debated the key issues in the case of Rosa Parks. They then got creative making collages to design ironing boards and completed a Rosa Parks timeline to remember the key events.



Year 3 pupils chose a famous artist to for their research homework, including Stormzy and Emeli Sande. also completed reading comprehensions on Usain Bolt and Rosa Parks.

Year 4 researched and created **PowerPoints** about inspirational people and completed a fun Maths addition worksheet to reveal a famous inventor. Whilst Year 5 studied former astronaut, Dr. Mae C Jemison.

Year 10 and 11 French and Spanish pupils translated songs and poems about social issues, such immigration. French pupils then had conduct some independent research about a person from the French speaking world who has made an impact culturally or politically and has helped fight racism.



It was a very important month of learning for all the pupils!

#### New 'Jigsaw 'PHSE Scheme

This year, all of the schools have introduced the Jigsaw scheme to pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Jigsaw is a mindful approach to PSHE, which brings together personal, social, health education, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning.

Pupils have been excited to meet the

entertaining Jigsaw Friends, as well as Jigsaw Jerrie Cat who reminds the children to stop and think.

Pupils have already enjoyed working through the first two topics — Being Me in My World and Celebrating Difference. They are gradually developing an awareness of their thoughts and feelings and are starting to use a range of strategies to help them deal with different situations. They are also beginning to expand

their emotional vocabulary so that they can express themselves more confidently. Well done everybody!





#### Fun in the Wild Woods

Reception children at Oaklands have had lots of fun when exploring the 'Wild Woods' during their lessons.

They learned about all the natural materials that can be found in the Wild Woods and then put these to good use by creating self-portraits,



making their own mud for mark making and practising name writing. The children have enjoyed using the mud kitchen as well and have created lots of imaginative meals including some mud cakes for a birthday party!

Children enjoyed exploring colour mixing by making some spooky potions. They added in lots of natural resources to their potions to observe the effects.

KS1 also get to enjoy the Wild Woods during an after-school club. Pupils have created their own fairy gardens complete with fairies, goblins, trolls and mandrakes. They even planted flowers with woodchips to add the finishing touches to their gardens. Back in September, Wild Woods Club spent three weeks taking part in a Big Bee Project. They learned all about the importance of bees through pollination game and then made wildflower cannon balls and sowed wildflower seed in their new 'Bee B&B' area.

Children can't wait to see the wildflowers bloom for the bees!



#### **Remembrance Day**

Pupils from all four schools took part in a moving two minutes silence in November in order to remember the brave men and women who lost their lives in conflict during the wars.



Coopersale Hall pupils made their own poppies to collaborate on a display of

Remembrance. They used lots of different mediums to create their poppies and purple poppies were included Year 3 Crick in by remembrance of all the service animals lost. Despite the usual Remembrance Day parade not going ahead this year, as is tradition Coopersale Hall still placed their wreath of poppies at the War Memorial in Epping.



Normanhurst pupils took part in a range of activities. Year 6 were fascinated to speak to Mr Brencher, who was a 4-year-old evacuee of World War II. Year 5 studied the poem 'In Flanders Field', and Year 1 made their own poppies and learned about significance of why we wear them.



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#### **Bubble Netball Day**

In November, Braeside pupils took part in a day of 'Bubble Netball'.





Years 3 to 11 all had a fantastic day competing in the event, safely in their bubbles. There was some excellent netball played, with great shooting, defending, movement off the ball and interceptions. Pupils loved cheering each other one and even the rain didn't dampen the pupils' spirit. Well done to everyone involved.



#### **Mad Hair Day**

Well done to all of the Coopersale Hall pupils who pulled out the stops for Mad Hair Day. There were lots of colourful and imaginative hairstyles at the school gates and pupils loved seeing all of their friends', and especially the teachers', mad hair!













#### **Charity Work**

Throughout the year, all schools across the Group regularly take part in a range of charitable events. We are very proud of all our pupils and the interest they show in helping others.

Braeside pupils' first event of the term was 'Jeans for Genes Day', where pupils and staff all wore denim to support the charity. For Children in Need. Braeside's School Council organised a non-school uniform day and a 'Welly Walk' to raise money. To support Anti-Bullying Week, all pupils



wore odd socks to school as a statement that it's ok to be different and as reminder that bullying is never appropriate. Year 6 pupil Bobbie, along with her classmates, organised a cake sale to raise money for 'Smiles Across Miles'. The charity enables

children in Zambia to have Christmas dinner and a visit from Father Christmas. The last event before the holidays was Christmas Jumper Day to support Save The Children. Everyone looked very festive in their Christmas themed jumpers and outfits.

October, Normanhurst juniors celebrated Dyslexia Awareness Day by wearing red. They learnt about the learning difficulty and raised money to



donate to the British Dyslexia With the Association. help neighbours and classmates, siblings Nicolás and Sofía collected 60 advent calendars for a local charity called 'Bags of Kindness'. The charity works with victims of domestic violence and gives the advent calendars to spread a little Christmas joy. Whilst the Charity Committee has not been able to hold as many fundraisers as usual this term,

they would like to thank those who supported their new initiative of also selling Normanhurst advert calendars in aid of their chosen charities. Also, a big thank you must go to all the parents and pupils who donated shoeboxes to the annual Operation Christmas Child appeal, Normanhurst received a massive 115 shoeboxes packed with toys and goodies!

Oaklands school also supported Children in Need, with pupils coming to school in lots of colourful or spotty clothing. In September, pupils raised a fantastic £279.90 for 'Jeans for Genes Day'. Oaklands Staff held a Macmillan Coffee Morning during the term which raised £141.47!

As always, a big thank you to our parents and pupils for supporting and donating!





#### **Harvest Festivals**

Harvest may have been marked a little differently this year, but this did not stop pupils across the group from celebrating and donating.

Braeside and Normanhurst pupils both put on a virtual Harvest Festival. Braeside pupils worked hard to learn their Harvest songs and dance moves, including a special School Lockdown



song. Normanhurst pupils recorded themselves singing, acting reading, with a key focus on saying thank you to unsung heroes.



Oaklands and Coopersale Hall went ahead with socially distanced harvest festivals.

As always, thank you to everyone who donated. Each school sends donations to different charities, which include The Whitechapel Mission and Manna



Day Centre. Your generous donations made a noticeable difference.



#### Oak-Tree Challenge

Pupils from across the Group have been enjoying completing their Oak-Tree Challenge Awards during the Autumn Term. Despite the current difficulties and restrictions, pupils have still been eager to take part and

have been adjusting some of the



challenges to make them work. Pupils were creative, turning the residential challenge turned into camping in the garden with children putting up the tent, cooking on a fire and spending the night outside. Other challenges included participating in an outdoor pursuit for the day, which saw pupils try sailing, canoeing and cycling.



Another task was to take part in a fundraising event, with some pupils collaborating to plan a Halloween front garden bake sale for charity.

We are proud of all the effort pupils have put into the challenge and they were very pleased to receive either their Bronze or Silver Awards. Well done all!



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## **Epping Town Council Poppy Competition**

During the October half term, local school children were invited to draw and send in their poppy artwork to Epping Town Council and three Coopersale Hall pupils had their designs picked out!

Congratulations to Ula who was a second winner in the competition, with her design being featured on the back cover of Talk About Epping magazine and on a banner outside Epping Hall.



Congratulations also to Neve, Abigail and Isabelle who were runners up in the competition, with their artwork also being displayed outside Epping Hall.

What a fantastic achievement – well done to all of our winners!



## Oaklands Diwali Virtual Dance Workshops

Pupils at Oaklands enjoyed taking part in Ramayana Diwali dance workshops that were live-streamed into the hall on Zoom. Years 3 and 5 learned routines that brought to life the Ramayana - a Hindu story of Rama and Sita.

The workshop focused on the importance of imagination and storytelling and pupils were able to express all of the drama and passion of the story through a series of highly



choreographed moves. Pupils worked in small groups to create their own dance sequences for different parts of the story, which were all fantastic!

After looking at some of the

characteristic features of Indian dance with traditional music, Year 5 said they felt like they had been transported to a magical place.

They can't wait to take part in another workshop!



#### **Social Media**



braesidesch
coopersalesch
normanhurstschool
oaklandssch



@BraesideSch
@CoopersaleHSch
@NormanhurstSch
@OaklandsSch



Braeside School

Coopersale Hall School

Normanhurst School

Oaklands School



#### **Extra-Curricular Clubs**

Throughout the Group, despite the Coronavirus restrictions, our pupils were still able to enjoy taking part in a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities from our repertoire during the Autumn Term.



While the sun was still shining, Coopersale Hall pupils enjoyed lots of outdoor clubs. Golf club was back in full swing, with Year 6 pupils playing at Epping Forest Golf Course and practising professional coach. Pupils in Tennis Club were able to practice their serving and game skills by competing against each other in matches at the end of their sessions. Those who attend Netball Club loved being back on the practice courts again, where they worked hard on their shooting and defence skills.

Those in the Oaklands Netball Club could practice their shooting skills, and can't wait to get back to playing competitive matches when the time comes.

Oaklands pupils were also able to attend the Strategy Board Games Club. They have particularly enjoyed learning how to play chess, Chinese chequers, Uno, draughts and Ludo. KS1 Art Club made their own

woodland creatures by putting googly eyes, legs, noses and tails onto fallen leaves they had collected. KS2 Art Club's focus was on all things Christmassy as the children made their own tree decorations that looked like Santa. As always, Cookery Club made lots of delicious creations throughout the term!



#### Braeside's Virtual Comic **Drawing Workshop**



Year 7, 8 and 9 participated in an online workshop led by French illustrator Claire Fauvel, author of the comic book 'La Guerre Catherine's (Catherine's War), after the novel by Julia Billet.

Students were introduced to the novel, based on a true story, relating the fate of Jewish children in Nazi occupied France. During workshop, Claire Fauvel demonstrated how to create a comic strip from sketching to fine lining drawing and colouring. B



Our Braeside pupils were extremely engaged by the workshop and it was impressive to see the progress they had made by the end.



#### Normanhurst's 'Gift **Birthday Book' Scheme**



This year, Normanhurst has started a new voluntary initiative for staff and pupils to donate a copy of their favourite book on their birthday to the

school library. On the inside cover it is recorded who gifted the book and the reason why they enjoyed it so much.

We have been astounded by the response from pupils and staff who have donated their favourite books. Some pupils have even donated books despite it not being their birthdays!





What an excellent start to a very worthwhile scheme - thank vou to everyone for your generosity!

#### Braeside's Learning **Performance Company**

At Braeside, Year 8, 9 and 10 pupils each enjoyed participating in revision session by the Learning





Performance Company. Learning Performance specialise in identifying learning styles and the best ways to study and revise for each individual pupil. They provide fun and engaging

sessions where pupils can take away information and tips on the best way to approach assessments in the future.

All the pupils learnt some useful revision techniques.



#### **YouTube Channels**

Visit our schools' YouTube Channels to see videos from some of the many events that take place through the year.

**Braeside School** Coopersale Hall School **Oaklands School** Normanhurst School



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## KS2 House Cross County Competition



Pupils in Years 3 to 6 at Oaklands enjoyed taking part in the annual House Cross Country Run on the school field last term. Staff took care to run the event safely, with each class taking its turn to run as many laps in

their designated time as possible.

Every one of the pupils ran as hard as they could to complete as many laps as possible to earn valuable points for their house. They even had a special 'Cow Bell' which was clanged every time they passed to give them an extra boost!





The results were extremely close but the eventual joint winners were Willow and Beech with the same number of laps each. Well done to everyone who took part, all the pupils should be proud of their efforts!

#### Results: 1st - Willow & Beech - 95 laps

### Normanhurst's Junior School Council

Before lockdown, last year's Junior School Council at Normanhurst entered a competition that required them to produce a poster to inspire their local community to protect the environment. Their posters were greatly received by 'Action Pack' and

they were successful in winning the top prize! As a result, they were given some seeds that they enjoyed planting in the grounds to encourage wildlife to visit, and some lovely story books promoting the importance of caring for the world around us. Well done to the School Council, this was a fantastic achievement!

You can see their entries here.



#### **Virtual Open Events**

Back in October, the Oak-Tree Group held an innovative week of Virtual Open Events. Hundreds of prospective families signed up to hear from the headmistresses, staff and pupils, take a virtual tour of the school and listen to a detailed question and answer session. All the information is currently on each school's website, which you can find here:

Braeside

**Coopersale Hall** 

**Normanhurst** 

**Oaklands** 



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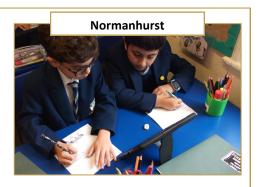
#### iPad Work



Pupils across the Oak-Tree Group have enjoyed using our banks of iPads during their lessons to enhance their learning. They have been used in a range of lessons from helping with map work in Geography, to working







through Maths-based apps, assisting with independent research and even for creative reasons like making fun movie trailers!

The pupils have enjoyed using the iPads and they are very useful for building independent studying and learning new skills.

# ISA Film and Digital Art Competition

Well done to the pupils who entered the Independent Schools Association Film and Digital Art Competition.

Rebecca, one of our Braeside pupils, came first in the Digital Art category with her piece titled 'Self-Portrait - Confidence'.

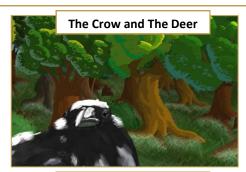
Normanhurst pupils Sydney and Sam came first and second in the Computer Animation category. Sydney won first place for his Cambodian animation 'The Crow and The Deer' and Sam won second place for his 'State of Change' pencil drawing animation.

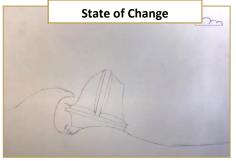
You can see both animations here.

These are fantastic achievements. Well done to each pupil!



Self Portrait—Confidence

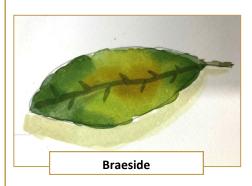






#### Art at the Oak-Tree Group

Pupils at Braeside have been studying a range of different art styles including observational art, Islamic art and Neurographic art. Pupils enjoyed learning about different styles and techniques and have explored line, shading, texture, blending and water colour. As a result, they have produced some excellent work.



Year 1 pupils at Coopersale Hall enjoyed incorporating their topic of 'Houses' into their artwork. They looked at the work of artists Lowry, Van Gogh and Chagall and then tried to replicate their paintings. After studying the Stone Age, Year 4 created some replica cave art drawings. They found various objects that could be used to create colour and texture, including moss, petals, berries, grass and mud, and drew a variety of prehistoric animals, people and hands, all of which have been discovered in caves around Europe.



After learning about the festival of Diwali, Year 3 pupils at Normanhurst created their own Diwa Lamps. They used clay to make their lamps and then painted their own designs onto them using lots of bright colours. Year 6 worked on some 'Movement' themed art work. They designed silhouettes of animals, dancers and footballers, then stuck their designs on paper before painting over them with water colours.

Reception pupils at Oaklands also



enjoyed learning about festivals and celebrations. They learnt about fireworks night, and made some firework paintings. They also studied Diwali and painted their own Rangoli Pattern and made Diwa lamps. In Art History, Year 5 studied William Morris. The looked at some of his well-known pieces and enjoyed producing their own art in his style, including designing their own tile designs.



#### **Prefect Duties**

At Coopersale Hall, pupils chosen to be prefects or on the school council always enjoy the extra responsibility that comes with these roles. The school prides itself on giving the Year 6 pupils jobs that involve hard work and dedication!

One prefect, Ralph, keeps the PE resources cupboard tidy and ready to

use. He works hard to ensure that the equipment is always ready for a full day of activities, which Mr Robinson appreciates!

Library monitor, Scarlett, and school council secretary, Riya, had lots of fun being involved in the Christmas project to decorate the library. Riva took photos around the school and wrote a report about how other children were enjoying the new wet play toys kindly donated by FoCHS.





#### **Christmas Activities Across** the Group

Despite the unusual times, we were very pleased that so many Christmas activities could be adapted to still go throughout the December was filled with lots of rehearsals and filming for the pupils' virtual Christmas performances. The final performances were fantastic and hope that parents enjoyed watching them as much as we did! During the last week of school, all pupils enjoyed a tasty Christmas dinner within their bubbles.

Year 6 House Captains at Braeside started the festivities by decorating the Christmas tree, which was placed in the garden for all pupils to see.



Pupils enjoyed an online viewing of a pantomime in their classrooms, complete with Year 11 taking orders for popcorn. The whole school assembled in their bubble for a festive carol service for their neighbours in 'Hawsted Flats'. Pupils really enjoyed performing for the residents as they watched from their balconies and gardens. Kindergarten to Year 6 had fun at a socially distanced Bubble Disco and Activity Evening organised

by FOBS and staff. Crazy Legs DJ provided some safe and fun musical entertainment and pupils were on rotation in bubbles to have hot chocolate under the Christmas lights and do some Christmas crafts!

Coopersale Hall had a very festive makeover to get pupils into the Christmas spirit. The library and school office were covered in numerous Christmas trees popped up over the school and colourful festive displays adorned the walls. Whilst enjoying their Christmas lunch, pupils were very excited to receive a socially distanced visit from Santa. All pupils were involved in making Christmas crafts this year, which included making cards, calendars, decorations and gifts for their families, and they also enjoyed a virtual pantomime. As pupils were unable to visit the local nursing home to sing carols this year, they decided to send their Christmas card entries to each resident to spread some festive cheer.



Normanhurst pupils enjoyed a week of Christmas parties in their bubbles. There was a range of festive music for pupils to show off their dance moves. but the highlight was when Santa visited to give them all a present for

being so good in school this year. Pupils were fortunate to have a travelling pantomime company come into the school and perform for them in their bubbles. Year 5 pupils were busy creating lots of Christmas themed art. All pupils had fun throughout December keeping a lot out for Norman the cheeky elf. Each day he would hide somewhere in the school until another pupil found him!



Pupils at Oaklands were delighted to receive Christmas post boxes in their classrooms so that they could send Christmas cards to their friends. Upper Kindergarten pupils were very excited to write their letters to Santa. They each wrote what they would like and then sent them off to the North Pole. Year 4 made their own Christingles and learnt about the meaning of Christmas. Then, to end the term, all pupils were able to come to school in their Christmas jumpers.



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#### **Early Years Play Area**

After moving up to the main school site, Early Years pupils have really enjoyed playing and learning in their newly extended play area, which was completely remodelled in the October half term. Most of the area is now covered, meaning the children are able to make use of the play equipment in the winter, and there is a new heavy duty rubberised play area to ride bikes and scooters on.

All pupils enjoy having the Early Years pupils on the same site now. They have welcomed the opportunity to be



role models for the younger children and have been sharing exciting events with them.



#### Oak-Tree Schools Parents' Associations

Despite the fact that many planned events could not go ahead during the Autumn Term, our Parents' Associations were still busy arranging a number of COVID-safe events for the pupils. The Parents' Associations are always looking for parents to help with fundraising or events. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with your committee if you would like to meet new families, contribute your ideas and work together to make a difference to your child's education.

#### **Braeside**



Kindergarten to Year 6 pupils enjoyed a socially-distanced Bubble Disco and Activity Evening which FOBS helped to organise, with entertainment provided by Crazy Legs DJ. FOBS also kindly paid for all pupils to enjoy popcorn whilst watching the online pantomime.

#### **Coopersale Hall**



FOCHS arranged three exciting events over Christmas. They set up the Christmas basket raffle that gave families a chance to win one of the festive Christmas hampers. They set up a virtual gift shop for pupils to select gifts from a special brochure and also organised a visit from Santa for the pupils. The pupils enjoyed playing with the new wet play toys and games kindly donated by FOCHS.

#### **Normanhurst**



Pupils have enjoyed playing with the new table tennis table and giant Connect 4 game in the playground this term, which was purchased by the NSPA. The NSPA also arranged a 'Xmas Zoom Quiz' where we enjoyed seeing so many families get involved and have lots of fun doing so!