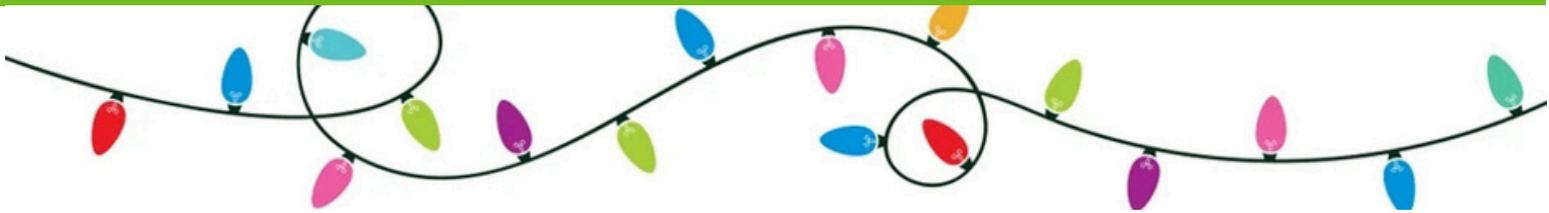


News Hub



DECEMBER
2025

Update from the Headteacher and The Senior Leadership Team



As we come to the end of our first term together, we want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a truly remarkable start to the year at Oak Tree School.

This term, we have successfully welcomed over 50 new students and a number of new staff into our community. Many of our students joined us having previously found school incredibly challenging, with some unable to remain in school for longer than 45 minutes. To now see those same students accessing full school days, taking part in offsite visits, and engaging positively in learning, performing in school productions and community activities is something we should all feel immensely proud of.

Across the school, we are seeing strong, trusting relationships forming between students, staff and families. Community visits have been successful, confidence has grown, and our young people are showing us every day what is possible when the right support is in place.

We are also pleased to share that Joanna has joined us as our new Family Support Worker. From the new year, Joanna will be working closely with families to provide additional support, guidance and connection, further strengthening the wraparound approach that sits at the heart of Oak Tree.

Thank you to our staff for your commitment, care and professionalism, and to our families for your trust and partnership. Together, you have helped make this term such a positive foundation for the future.

We wish you all a restful and joyful Christmas break and look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year as we continue the next part of our students' journey at Oak Tree School.

SLT



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0118 216 0040



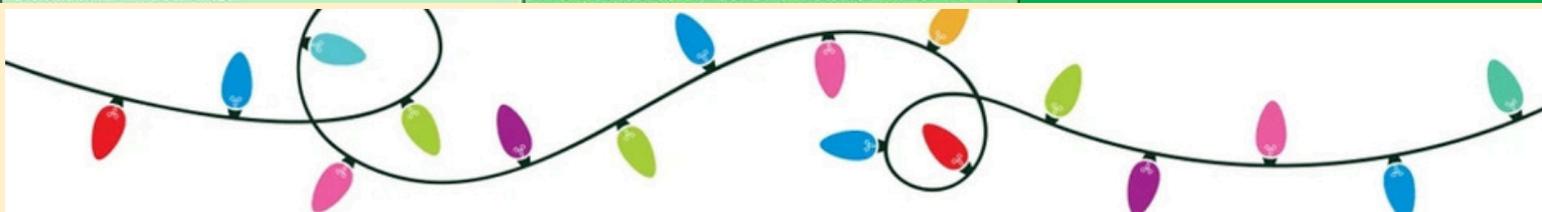
OTS@maidenerlegthrust.org

Curriculum at OTS

At Oak Tree School, we recognise that our students have a wide range of individual needs, which is common in a setting that supports young people with autism and associated complex needs. To best meet these needs, we offer a number of tailored curriculum pathways designed to support each student's unique strengths, abilities, and learning styles. As students progress into Key Stage 4, we will introduce additional pathways that focus on preparing them for adulthood and their next steps beyond school. These options will be refined and explained to parents of Year 9 students before being shared with all families.

This approach reflects what all Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools strive to do - ensuring that students are not set up to fail, but are instead supported through pathways that are carefully matched to their individual needs, interests, and future aspirations. Our overarching aim is to nurture independence and equip our students with the skills they need for later life. We are deeply committed to supporting the whole child - focusing not only on academic progress, but equally on personal, social, emotional, and life skills development to help each student thrive both in and beyond the classroom

Curriculum at OTS		
Immersive/ Meadow	Flexible/ Emerald	Concrete/ Forest
<p>Meadow learners have complex learning needs.</p> <p>This curriculum is designed to enable students to learn functional skills and experience a range of activities through meeting students' sensory needs.</p> <p>The focus is on developing key skills of communication, cognition, independence and personal care in an engaging and stimulating environment.</p> <p>Immersive/ Meadow learners are unlikely to go on to further education or a workplace.</p> <p>Therapeutic Input may be significant in order for them to meet their goals.</p> <p>Teaching and learning is sensory based with opportunities for practice and repetition.</p> <p>The progress is evidenced through engagement and participation in the process of learning.</p>	<p>Emerald <u>follow</u> a flexible curriculum.</p> <p>Students have significant learning difficulties, and some may have a complexity of needs and emergent communication, social and interaction skills.</p> <p>The focus on this pathway is a narrower selection of options which may be linked to employability.</p> <p>Flexible/ Emerald learners have an Inconsistent profile and learn best through a combination of experiential learning and a topic-based approach.</p> <p>Life skills permeate the <u>curriculum</u> and it focuses on real life experiences and application in engaging and stimulating environments.</p> <p>Students <u>have the opportunity to pursue accreditation</u> in Entry Levels, Functional Skills and Level 1 courses at KS4. Some</p>	<p>Forest learners have developing communication, social and interaction skills.</p> <p>They have a more consistent learning profile and are able to access a range of subjects for their key stage, at age related expectations.</p> <p>It aims to develop higher order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving as well as functional skills, employability and independence skills.</p> <p>Concrete/ Forest learners are able to access lessons delivered in a more traditional format.</p> <p>Students <u>have the opportunity to pursue formal level 2 qualifications</u> at KS4 such as GCSEs, IGCSEs and AlmVoc courses.</p>



PTA at OTS

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are excited to announce that we are starting a brand-new Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at our school.

The aim of the PTA is simple: to bring families, staff and the school community together to support our children, enhance school experiences and help fund projects that make a real difference.

We want this to be a friendly, flexible and inclusive group. Whether you can help regularly, occasionally, or simply support events from a distance, every contribution is valued.

Our first official meeting will be: Friday 9th January 2026 at 9.10am at Oak Tree.

At this meeting we will:

Introduce and elect the remaining committee members

An overall of the purpose of the PTA

Share early ideas and listen to yours

Discuss simple, achievable first projects

We are also planning to host a PTA Coffee Afternoon on Friday 30th January 2026 at 2pm at Oak Tree. This will be a relaxed chance to meet other families, ask questions and get to know the PTA in an informal setting.

If you would like to get involved, ask questions, or express interest but cannot attend the meeting, please contact us at: oaktreepta@hotmail.com.

Meet the volunteers so far!



Shannon: Our newly appointed chairman of the PTA and also serves as a parent representative on the school board. With a professional background in resource management in the private pensions sector, she contributes skills in strategic planning and operational support. As the parent of a child with profound autism, she is particularly passionate about inclusion, communication and ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed. She looks forward to working with the school community to support ongoing improvements and strengthen collaboration between families and staff.



Grace: Hi, I'm a mum of two girls, including one in Year 2 at Oak Tree. I've been part of a PTA before and loved seeing the joy it brought to the children and the difference it made to the school. I work as an EA and do lots of event planning! So, I'm really excited to get involved, support the team and help make great things happen for our school community.

PTA at OTS



Sarah: Hi, I have a son in year 9. I also serve as a parent representative on the school advisory board along with Shannon. After spending most of my working life as a pensions consultant, I am using my lived life experience of parenting a neurodiverse child and have recently started a new role and am now working for an organisation who support families like ours. I am excited to be involved with the PTA to support fundraising that will benefit all of the amazing young people at Oak Tree.



Michelle: Hi, I'm a mum of three, with one of my children currently attending Oak Tree School. He has autism and global developmental delay and he experiences significant sensory and selective needs around food, smells and textures. Through our journey, I've learned the importance of patience, understanding and strong home-school communication. I'm joining the PTA because I'm passionate about helping create an inclusive, supportive environment where all children and their families feel understood, welcomed and valued.



Cath: A mum to 3 autistic children with my middle daughter in Year 7 at Oak Tree. I am a Primary School Teacher in Woodley so have the experience of working within a school team. I am excited to join the PTA to help support our children by raising vital funds for resources to be used in school. I am looking forward to meeting more parents from the Oak Tree community and working together to achieve the very best for the children.



Sophie: A teacher with over 25 years experience, who now works in Higher Education, specialising in teacher training. As a parent to a Year 3 girl, she is passionate about neuro advocacy, education and Autism awareness, particularly in relation to female Autism. She has joined the PTA as she wants to contribute towards creating opportunities for all the students at Oak Tree.

We look forward to working together to make great things happen for our children.



The Term In Pictures

