

DAWLISH FEDERATION OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS

7th February 2017

Dear Parents/Carers/Guardians,

The children at both Ratcliffe and Oaklands have been working hard over the last half term, in particular, we have been involved in a SENTient project providing thoughts about what a good day and bad day look like in our schools. All 10 Special schools have been part of the project which culminates in a mini festival at Tiverton Hotel on Thursday 9th. Two students from each school will be representing the Student Councils, with the work being presented to Local Authority staff and other officials. The outcomes will be used to formulate the SENTient Trust Action Plan which will be shared with you sometime in the near future.

To this end, each school has been asked to share good practice with all other schools on 24th March. Oaklands staff will talk about the sensory/communications process and Ratcliffe staff will be presenting work on the Tri-Curriculum and the LASSI (Life and Social Skills Index).

Just a quick reminder that we cannot administer any medication that is not sent into school in the right packaging. The dosage and times must be clearly shown on the package if prescribed by your GP or other medical practitioners.

If your child requires homely remedies, we can administer these as long as we have your written consent. Please contact the respective school if you have any concerns about this process.

STAFFING

We have two new members of staff across the Federation. Julie Trick is the new Admin Assistant at Oaklands and Dawn Mohr is the new Admin Assistant at Ratcliffe. We welcome them both to the teams.

A new part time Counsellor, Helen Stephenson will be joining us at the end of February to work alongside our current Counsellor at Ratcliffe.

Melanie Anstead will be leaving Oaklands at the end of this half term. Her replacement will be Mandy McVitty, who has been shadowing Mel for the last few weeks. Mandy is a member of the Care Team, but she is really looking forward to her new role and also working with parents after the break.

Jane Kelly will be leaving Ratcliffe after the break.

Both members of staff will be greatly missed.

We were not successful in appointing a new Head of School for Oaklands, but will keep you informed about any plans for this role after half term.

FEDERATION NEWS

French Trip – some pupils in Year 8 and above, will have the opportunity to visit France in May this year. Letters will be sent out shortly.

We are in the process of enhancing the training of our Play Therapist at Ratcliffe so that she will be able to work across the Federation in future. This is an area that we want to develop over the next few years. Mrs Chave is looking forward to the challenge ahead as she is also a class teacher.

THRIVE is also developing . Mrs Smith and Miss Tanner have both attended the additional training re adolescents and will be working with our older students. However, all staff have had training re THRIVE so we are hoping to develop the whole school approach across the Federation.

Mr Rose has been developing Phonics across the school and has recently won a bid for funding from the schools alliance. The funding will be used to develop the teaching of phonics and literacy across Oaklands, with ideas and progress being shared across the Federation.

Ten Tors training continues for both schools. Unfortunately, the planned overnight session had to be cancelled due to the poor weather. Two students from Ratcliffe will be undertaking the 34 mile trek this year. We wish them luck.

FINALLY

Grease has been delayed at my request. The performance will now take place on Thursday 30th March. An afternoon of presentations will take place at Oaklands on Wednesday 29th March. Invites to all parents will go out after the break.

It is exam season again. Some of the exams have started already, but our Year 10 and 11 students are preparing for their papers now. We have also extended the Exams Officer role across the Federation so that we can access the appropriate accreditation for all students. This will start with Entry Level qualifications sitting alongside the AQA awards. Again, we wish our students good luck with their exams.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AT RATCLIFFE SCHOOL

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| Friday 10 th February | Pupils home at 1.00 p.m. for Half Term |
| Monday 20 th February | Pupils return to school |
| Friday 31 st March | Pupils home for Easter |
| Tuesday 18 th April | Pupils return to school as per Monday timings for the taxis |

C White

MRS. C. WHITE,
Executive Head Teacher