

Oak-Tree NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022



Issue 18

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Group Principal's Message

It's been fantastic to see more and more normality return to school life over the course of this academic year after such a challenging period.

As you'll see in this bumper edition, we managed to pack a huge number of curricular and extra-curricular activities into the Summer Term, as well as the full programme of sports days, prize days and performances. This return to normality has been important for us all to come together again as school communities and to enable our pupils to achieve and excel academically, sportingly, musically and dramatically. We really do have some talented pupils across the Group.

Thank you all for your incredible ongoing support of our schools. We are very fortunate to have been able to maintain and build on such excellent home-school partnerships that clearly benefit the children.

I would like to wish those pupils well who are starting new schools or colleges over the coming weeks having worked their way through our schools. Good luck to you all!

I hope that you and your families have been able to enjoy this summer's break and spend some time valuable together. I'm looking forward to seeing everybody back in on Monday 5 September.

With best wishes

Matthew Hagger

Farewells

After 24 years at Oaklands School, Headmistress Sue Belej is retiring to spend more time with her family both in Spain and the UK.

She will be greatly missed but we wish her the best of luck in this exciting new chapter of her life!





Young Voices

Young Voices is the largest school choir in the world, and we were delighted that it restarted this year after a Covid absence. Some 150 children in Years 5 and 6 from the Oak-Tree Group joined thousands of other children from over the UK to take part in the event at the O2 in London.



This year was extra special as the Young Voices Choir celebrated its 25th birthday. With special guest performers such as Ruti Olajugbagbe, who won The Voice, Urban Strides, who are led by Europe's most qualified street dance instructors, and The Beatbox Collective, who are World Beatbox Champions; it was a spectacular event. The pupils sang and danced all evening and even got the chance to compete against their teachers and parents to see who were the best singers, dancers and beatboxers. Of course, the pupils won!

Performing as part of an 8000-person choir at the O2 was a fantastic experience for all involved and they



were amazing ambassadors for the Group. Well done to all of Year 5 and 6!

Friends and family were invited to buy tickets and come and watch, and the Oak-Tree section of the O2 was full of proud family and friends.

What a lovely way to spend a Friday evening!

Oak-Tree Tennis Tournament



On Friday 27 May, all 4 of the Oak-Tree Schools came together for a Junior Tennis Tournament. The tournament was held at the Chingford School of Tennis and the weather was perfect. Pupils enjoyed taking each other on in short double and singles matches.



Not only did the children have a lot of fun and improve their tennis skills, but it was also an excellent opportunity for pupils to get to know each other better and make new friends across the Group - with a little friendly competition of course!



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Early Years Activities

Oaklands

Children in Lower Kindergarten at Oaklands have been enjoying a number of stimulating activities this term. The honey inspired sensory tray was a hit with the children as they enjoyed getting very sticky hands!

For their topic 'Superheroes' the children made their own 'Supertato' complete with mask and cape. They loved dressing up as a superhero and deciding what super powers they had.

The dry weather has allowed the children to spend lots of time outside, working on their balancing on the adventure playground's wobbly bridge and learning to share the garden toys.



Oaklands School

Normanhurst

The children in Kindergarten enjoy the garden area and have been growing a variety of flowers and vegetables. The children harvested fresh peas and potatoes and enjoyed eating them as afternoon snacks. Kindergarten also loved playing in their indoor beach,



Normanhurst School

complete with a rock pool and ice-cream shop!

Working in teams, the children took to the garden area to take part in a treasure hunt. Their teachers were very impressed with their teamwork, enthusiasm and skills when following the maps and clues.

Braeside

Reception have enjoyed their walks to the forest. They identified trees, shrubs and forest animals whilst collecting materials to produce leaf prints and paintings when they got back to class.

The Early Years outdoor space turned into a spectacular Dino-world, complete with a dinosaur park ranger



Braeside School

hut and bone and fossil wall.

The children had fun taking part in activities such as a forest trek to look for dinosaurs with their new binoculars. They collected lots of natural materials, like stones and leaves from around the garden to help build their dinosaur forest. The children took lots of time and care to make sure the forest was the perfect habitat for their toy dinosaurs to live in!

Coopersale Hall

As part of their topic on 'minibeasts', the children in Upper Kindergarten made their own wiggly worms by carefully threading beads on wire.



Coopersale Hall School

Lower Kindergarten children performed their first ever assembly for their parents this term. They sang songs and played instruments for the parents and children from across the school. The children worked hard to remember all of the lyrics and dance moves and made their teachers and parents very proud.



Braeside Forensic Workshop

ForensicFun visited pupils in Year 9 and Year 10 on Tuesday 28 June. Armed with evidence from ballistics, medical reports, fingerprints and testimony, pupils were encouraged to challenge The Warren Commission produced in the wake of the assassination of John F Kennedy in 1963.

Unusually for pupils, the aim of the event was to leave them with more questions than answers – to look at how science was used at crime scenes nearly 60 years ago and to see how technology has changed the face of media coverage, making a conspiracy theory less likely to take root in the criminal investigations today.



Oak-Tree Spelling Bee

Eight children from each school took part in this year's Spelling Bee: two from each year group from Year 3 to Year 6.

This was another excellent opportunity to link with all the Oak-Tree Schools and compete against each other. The event was hosted by Coopersale Hall School.

Each year group was given 20 challenging spellings linked to their age and curriculum. The four heats were rotated and points added up after each round. The children were challenged and they did us all proud.

The results were as follow:

Braeside School - 1st Place

Normanhurst School - 2nd Place

Coopersale Hall School - 2nd Place

Oaklands School - 3rd Place

All the children across the Group enjoyed taking part in this competition and we are already planning to have another challenge next year.

We want to congratulate and thank each of the children who participated in this event. Well done Braeside and everyone who took part.



Coopersale Hall's Eco Council



The children in the Early Years Eco Council have been helping to keep the outdoor classroom, garden and playing fields tidy and clean. Using their new litter pickers, the children have been collecting any rubbish they find. Luckily all of the school's pupils are very respectful of the environment so the job hasn't been too hard!



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Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Children and teachers across all four schools had a fantastic time taking part in lots of Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Coopersale Hall

At Coopersale Hall the whole school was treated to an afternoon tea under the trees. Parents were then invited to join the pupils, who put on an entertaining show for them. After performing the National Anthem and several British favourites, the children donned their carefully created crowns and gave everyone a royal parade, complete with the Queen's signature hand wave.



Coopersale Hall School



Braeside

Braeside enjoyed a picnic style feast in

the sunshine, with classic British food such as sausage rolls and strawberries and cream! After eating, the older pupils lead games and other Jubilee-themed activities.



Braeside School



Normanhurst

Normanhurst had a week long celebration, with Morris and maypole dancing, plate painting and fact learning. To finish the week, the whole school enjoyed a street party in the playground with cakes and sandwiches. There was even a fun game of bingo.

Oaklands

Oaklands had a very special Royal visitor pose for photos in every classroom. We don't know how the Queen had time to go to every school!



Normanhurst School



At lunchtime everyone tucked in to the Great British classic, fish and chips, followed by delicious ice cream of course!



Oaklands School





Amazing Performances

Pupils from Year 5 and 6 at Oaklands performed the musical comedy 'Robin Hood and the Sherwood Hoodies' to their families in Lopping Hall at the end of term. The audience was entertained by hilarious, endearing and evil characters. The production had shocks, surprises, crazy characters and comic capers. The children

showed their talents with show-stopping songs, dances and comedic timing.

Years 4 to 6 at Coopersale Hall put on a fantastic performance of 'The Lion King' to their family and friends at Epping Hall. In the weeks running up to the show, the children spent their Art lessons making their own headdresses, getting creative to capture all the characteristics of their chosen animal. As well as getting their costumes ready, the children worked hard to learn all their lines and the lyrics to songs such as 'Hakuna Matata' and 'The circle of Life' to wow the audience.



Normanhurst pupils performed the swashbuckling adventure 'Treasure Island', complete with buried treasure, pirates, parrots and sword fighting. It was a fantastic performance and the pupils showed some excellent acting skills!



Normanhurst Summer BBQ

The Normanhurst Summer BBQ was a huge success, with families filling the school playground for an afternoon of food, fun and games. The annual sponging of Mr Christou was a highlight of the day, as well as a surprise guest appearance by Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP. We were so pleased to see the return of this fun family day.



Oaklands Summer Fete

On June 11 Oaklands saw the return of their annual Summer Fete after the enforced 2-year break. As the sun shone down, the field filled with hundreds of families ready for a day of fun.

There was a huge selection of rides and games to choose from as well as a very popular beer tent for the adults!



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Speech Day and Prize Giving

With the marquees set up, stages in place and friends and family eager to attend, it was time for the annual Speech Day and Prize Giving events at the end of term. Last year, each year group had to perform separately due to Covid restrictions, so it was even more special to bring everyone together again. These are fantastic events that celebrate the many achievements of the children over the school year.

Each school had a guest speaker who not only spoke about their role, but also helped to present the prizes.

Coopersale Hall welcomed Jacob Forman, the Director of Epping Forest Food Bank. He told the audience about the importance of Food Banks, his involvement and the difference they make to people in need.

This year's guest speaker at the Oaklands Speech Day was Ginny Donnelly, a member of the fundraising team at Haven House. Speaking about



Oaklands School

all of the vital work Haven House does to care for seriously ill children and their families.

Braeside welcomed Holly Whitbread, a District and County Councillor for Epping Forest. She spoke about community and how important it is to think of the people around you, congratulating Braeside on their connections to their local community.



Braeside School

Normanhurst had a former pupil come and present the prizes. Maya Simms, a student of Fine Art at the Slade School of Fine Art. It was interesting to hear about her life after Normanhurst.



Normanhurst School

Prizes at each event were awarded for pupils' academic, sporting, artistic and musical achievements, with further

awards given for other successes such as the Oak-Tree Challenge and specific subject prizes.



Coopersale Hall School

In addition to the presentation of prizes, the afternoons were filled with music and performances from pupils from a range of age groups. There were also some exciting announcements of the new positions of responsibility at each school.

Our pupils should be extremely proud of themselves for their achievements this year. Whether academically or creatively, in the classroom or on the sports field, individually or as a team, they have all succeeded and we're proud of them all.

The Oaklands Speech Day had an extra level of importance this year as staff, pupils and parents said a huge thank you and farewell to Mrs Belej. Mrs Belej made a touching speech before being presented with gifts and a few final words of thanks from Mr Hagger.



Braeside Olympic Park Trips



Pupils in Years 3 to 6 travelled to the Olympic Park where they took part in a cycling session at the velodrome to improve their bike handling and safety when riding. This was an excellent opportunity to improve their cycling skills on the same track as some of the best cyclists in the world.



All of the pupils enjoyed spending the afternoon exploring the Olympic park. Years 3 and 5 climbed on the playground and enjoyed ice-creams in the sunshine.



Year 4 had the amazing opportunity to climb to the top of the ArcelorMittal Orbit Sculpture enjoying the views of London before whizzing down the world's tallest tunnel slide!

Normanhurst's Dragons' Den

Aspiring young entrepreneurs from Years 5 to 9 were given exciting product and service ideas which they researched. They then presented their business plans and strategies.

This was an impressive event that encouraged individuals to step outside their comfort zone while enhancing

their public-speaking and persuasive skills. The event also helped them to prepare for the 'real' world.

It was incredible to see how enthusiastic the participants were and how well they presented their pitches. We hope to have more young enterprise events to encourage friendly competition in the coming years.



[braesidesch](https://www.instagram.com/braesidesch)
[coopersalesch](https://www.instagram.com/coopersalesch)
[normanhurstschool](https://www.instagram.com/normanhurstschool)
[oaklandssch](https://www.instagram.com/oaklandssch)



[@BraesideSch](https://twitter.com/BraesideSch)
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[@OaklandsSch](https://twitter.com/OaklandsSch)



[Braeside School](https://www.facebook.com/BraesideSchool)
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Braeside Performance

Shakespeare



The Young Shakespeare Company came to Braeside School on Friday 22 April to perform 'Romeo and Juliet' by William Shakespeare to our GCSE students from Year 9 to Year 11. The actors brought the story to life and gave a modern, abridged interpretation of the play for the students to relate to Shakespeare's work.

The actors made the play easy to understand and everyone, at some point, was laughing or crying.



This was a novel and interactive way to understand the works of the bard and we hope to organise some more performances soon!

Oaklands Maths Fair

The Year 5 and 6 children were challenged to be mathematicians for a day during the annual Maths Fair, where pupils had to manage their own stall. They worked together extremely well to plan their stalls, design posters, market the fair and on the day, to challenge the younger children with Maths problems that needed to be solved.

There were so many different types of stall, such as the flower boutique where the children had to add flower petals together, maths UNO, 'Guess the Shape' and so many more.

Children from Year 1 to Year 4 were invited to support the Year 5 and 6 children and they all had a fun-filled morning with lots of House points up for grabs.



Normanhurst Photography Competition

The Inter-house Photography Competition was a huge success this year, with so many amazing entries.

Pupils, staff and parents could enter photos into three different categories:

Digital Art, Surface & Pattern and Things That Unite Us.

It was wonderful to see how the pupils interpreted the brief, with pictures of cats, churches, football pitches and beaches all in one category!



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Sports Day

Each school held a highly successful Sports Day this year. All of our pupils enjoyed competing in a range of events, supporting their teammates and Houses crossing the finish line.

Braeside pupils, teachers, families and friends gathered at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre in the afternoon of Monday 4 July ready for Sports Day. For the Seniors, events included several relays and track events such as the 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m, with everyone showing excellent team



Braeside School

spirit cheering on their House. The Juniors took part in over and under races, sprints, egg and spoon and balancing races, all of which were lots of fun. It was lovely to see the older pupils helping our younger pupils across the finish line.

Coopersale Hall held Sports Day on Tuesday 21 June. The children competed in a variety of races to a huge crowd of very proud parents. Kindergarten took part in lots of fun races and really gave it their all.

Reception, Years 1 and 2 pupils took part in obstacle races, bat and beanbag races and flat races. Finally in the afternoon it was the turn of the Juniors, where each year group took it in turns to earn points for their House over a number of events. Once all the points had been added up, it was announced that Willow House were the winners.



Coopersale Hall School

On Thursday 23 June it was the turn of Normanhurst School to use the impressive outdoor facilities at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre for Sports Day. The morning was filled with Senior events such as running races, high jump, shot put, long jump, discus and javelin. This year, many school and personal records were broken. In the afternoon, the Juniors and Early Years children arrived, and they enjoyed taking part in the relay races, sprints, bat and bean bag races and skipping races in front of a large group of parents. Connaught House came out on top this year!



Normanhurst School

On the Oaklands Sports Day, which took place on Thursday 16 June, the sun was shining over the school field and there was a real feeling of team spirit in the air. This year events included hurdles, obstacles and flat running. Early Years and Years 1 & 2 races were held in the morning and the Years 3 to 6 events were held in the afternoon. Oaklands also had some very competitive parent races cheered on by the children!

Well done to all our pupils who really enjoyed competing in their various events. Thank you also to the friends and families who came to support and cheer the children on.



Oaklands School



Coopersale Hall Roman Day

Year 4 pupils have been learning about the Romans this year and held a special day to celebrate. Everyone dressed up in their finest Roman attire, including the Year 4 teachers, and took part in themed activities including a Latin spelling test, learning

Roman numerals in Maths, carving soap to create Roman art and finishing the day with a Roman buffet.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the day and learnt lots of new facts about the Romans. This interactive way of teaching was excellent to motivate and inspire the pupils.

Normanhurst Twilight & Summer Concerts

Normanhurst held a series of informal concerts in the music room after school this term to show the progress that the pupils have made in their music lessons.

Families and friends were treated to performances on trumpet, drums, clarinet, flute, saxophone, guitar, voice, piano, violin, viola and cello. Nearly 40 pupils performed and we were so impressed by the progress they have made over the year.

For most pupils, after 2 years of restrictions, this was their first opportunity to play for an audience and they all rose to the occasion, delighted to show off what they could do.

The year ended with a Summer Music concert which was a culmination of all of Normanhurst's talented pupils performing in a more formal setting. This was a wonderful evening for the audience and all of the children should be very proud.



Summer Fest 2022

Summer Fest was held on Friday 1 July on the lawn at Coopersale Hall School. This was the first event of its kind, and a little bit of a shake up from the usual Picnic in the Park event.

The afternoon started with the children singing a selection of songs

with summer vibes to their friends and families. The Years 4 and 6 Rock Band performed to the audience which was very impressive!

The children then enjoyed the large range of games and inflatables that were kindly provided by the parents' association. Everybody had a lovely afternoon!





School Trips

The summer term was jam-packed with trips for all four of the Oak-Tree Schools.

As well as their trips to the Olympic park, the pupils at Braeside enjoyed visiting the Petrie Museum and the British Museum, where they could examine ancient Egyptian artefacts.

Year 9 enjoyed overcoming their fears and taking high rope adventures. Pupils kept their balance along ropes suspended between trees, wobbly bridges and wooden beams, before zip lining their way down at the end of the trail.



High Rope Adventure

Coopersale Hall pupils have been to Kew Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea, Capel Manor, The Museum of London, the Sealife Centre and Paradise Wildlife Park.

Year 4 spent the day at The Roald Dahl Museum, where they got a look inside the weird and wonderful mind of Roald Dahl. They enjoyed learning

about his life and then dressing up as characters from his books.

Year 5 and Year 6 went to Stubbers for the day to experience a variety of activities. The children had a fantastic time trying their hands at rifle shooting, archery, raft building, and paddle boarding.



Stubbers

Kindergarten children and Year 2 at Normanhurst had a wonderful day at Paradise Wildlife Park. They saw lots of animals and explored the world of dinosaurs. They saw lions, zebras, camels, penguins, forest animals, and even an owl in flight. Everyone had lots of fun on the fire engine slide and



Colchester Castle

it was the perfect weather for a picnic.

Year 4 visited Colchester Castle, where they had the opportunity to explore the museum, investigating and observing a variety of artefacts. The children visited the prisons in the Castle and listened to a fascinating talk in the underground bunker.

At Oaklands, Year 4 and 5 had a fantastic three-day adventure at the Young Mariners Base. They learned many new skills including raft building, rock climbing, paddle boarding, archery, canoeing, sailing, kayaking and a range of other team building activities. All of our children enjoyed these new experiences.



Harry Potter Studio Tour

Year 6 became witches and wizards for the day on their trip to the Warner Brothers Studio Tour. The pupils loved getting a close up look at some of the props and costumes from the movies, even if it meant having to take a walk through the Forbidden Forest!



Braeside Oak-Tree Challenge

The Oak-Tree Challenge Scheme was designed to challenge our pupils. Those who took part this year have proved that they went above and beyond, persevered and successfully completed their challenges with extended journal entries and reflections both inside and outside of school. 19 pupils completed entries for the Bronze award and one for the Silver award by the deadline in June 2022.

For their first challenge, the public performance, pupils performed in the

Braeside House Drama and/or Some the School Christmas concert or Peri concert. Voluntary work carried out included yard sales, litter picking, gardening, looking after grandparents, helping in the community, becoming youth councillors, helping out at Rainbows and becoming Senior librarians. Many prepared and delivered a presentation in small groups to their classes after they had designed a leaflet on various themes, including the Queen's platinum jubilee.

Fantastic charity work was carried out,

raising money and supplies for Ukraine.

These pupils have shown amazing strength of character and should be very proud.



Youth Makes Art Competition

After a two-year enforced absence due to the pandemic, Rotary's Youth Makes Art Project returned with an explosion of creativity and colour.

The competition supports the community's young artists and also recognises the part played by our local schools in encouraging artistic expression.

On Friday 17 June, the Rotary Club of Epping hosted the art competition at St John's Church in Epping. Coopersale Hall School was delighted to have won 1st Prize for "Our Pointillism" piece created by the children in the current Year 6. This

piece was inspired by "Le Cirque" by Georges Seurat. A pupil from Year 6 was chosen to collect our winning certificates at the Award Ceremony from Mr Mike Morgan the president of the Rotary Club of Epping.

The winning piece has been on display around the school and is an amazing example of the artistic talent of the pupils



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Normanhurst Year 10 Careers Day

On Friday 1 July, pupils had the opportunity to listen to seasoned professionals who introduced them to their respective professions. The speakers were: Ozan Kazim (Finance), Mandy Aulak (Law), Helena Miles



(Business), Sinead Greenaway (Media), Dathan Muscat (Engineering/Architecture) and Debra Marcos (Medicine).

Following a drinks reception and lunch hosted by Mrs Job, Mrs Saint and Mrs Lafferty, they experienced lengthy formal interviews during which they had to talk about their ambitions, interests and involvement in everyday school life.

The interview panel was very impressed with our pupils and gave them some constructive feedback. The Year 10 group gained valuable experience in how to conduct



themselves in formal interviews with potential industry leaders, which was an experience that will be extremely useful for the forthcoming sixth form application process.

Essex Independent Schools Tennis Competition

Ava from Braeside teamed up with Cleo from Oaklands to enter the U11 Essex independent schools doubles tournament, winning in their final against New Hall A team 6 sets to nil!

The girls were awarded the inaugural Kannor Cup. What an amazing achievement!



A Special Guest at Oaklands

Neal Zetter, comedy performance poet, visited the school in May. The children were entertained in his assembly when he performed a few of his poems. Neal hosted a workshop that focussed on different and then encouraged the children to write their

own poems. Some of the children were given the opportunity to perform their work to their classmates. The younger children were given the chance to ask questions about Neal's career and love for poetry.

This was an inspiring visit for the pupils and teachers.



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Charity Fundraising

As ever, pupils from all four schools have worked hard to raise funds for different charities this term.

Coopersale Hall pupils enjoyed coming to school with some seriously crazy hair! Teachers also got into the spirit of the day and came with equally crazy hair.



Mad Hair Day



Oak-Tree Schools Parents' Associations

Without the help from our amazing Parents Associations, so many of this



NSPA
Normanhurst Parents' Association



The Big Toddle



Thanks to generous donations between Mad Hair Day and non-uniform day, Coopersale Hall managed to raise £765 for three amazing charities.

Kindergarten from Coopersale Hall and Normanhurst joined together in June to participate in the Big Toddle. The walk took place at the Suntrap Forest Centre where the

children were led into the woods to discover the hidden animals along the way. They raised over £1000 for the Barnardo's charity!

Oaklands pupils and their families collected an amazing amount of donations for Epping Forest Food Bank. The foodbank continues to play a vital role in reaching more people with the support they need. The children learned about citizenship and how they can make a positive difference within their local communities.

Food Bank Donations



term's events could not have gone ahead so smoothly. From Summer Fetes to leavers' celebrations, the PAs have supplied helping hands and funded fun activities

for the pupils.

Thank you all for everything you have done to make school extra special for our children this year.



Coopersale Hall's new Senior Department Update

From September 2023 the school will be welcoming an inaugural Year 7 year group as it starts the journey of becoming the third 'all through' school in the Oak-Tree Group. This will see a phased introduction of senior pupils over several years, with the aim of having a full senior department up to Year 11 from September 2027.

This major milestone in the school's development follows years of planning, starting with the purchase and redevelopment of a neighbouring cottage. The cottage is currently undergoing transformation into a senior building with classrooms, Art/DT studio, Science Lab, offices, support rooms, and ICT suite. Phase 2 will see the building of a new senior block with classrooms and changing rooms. As a brand new department, both internal and external senior pupils will have access to modern, facilities and new, high-quality resources.

Further plans include additional bicycle racks and electric car charging points to promote more sustainable travel to school. An outside area will also be re-landscaped to create a senior recreation/seating area.

The Group Management Team is already working on the new senior curriculum, which will be as broad and enriched as we have been developing in the other senior departments in the Group. We emphasise creative and active learning and aim to be a place without unnecessary stress or pressure.

Academic success is something we expect our pupils to aim for in all year groups so that they can fulfil their potential and move on to happy and fulfilled futures after Coopersale Hall, and be proud of their achievements.

The senior model will see one class of around 20-22 students, with the capacity for sets and smaller groups in many areas. Most senior lessons will be taught by subject specialists according to set curricula and using assessments that mirror those in place for GCSEs.

With around a year to go, the next few terms are going to be very busy preparing for this exciting new phase of the school's ongoing journey.

Watch this space for more updates!

