

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF BRAESIDE SCHOOL

It was announced in September 2015 that Braeside in Buckhurst Hill had joined the Oak-Tree Group of Schools alongside its new sister schools Coopersale Hall in Epping, Normanhurst in North Chingford and Oaklands in Loughton. Within the last year both sites have had extensive building work carried out and a new Headmistress has been appointed; Claire Osborn, who is also the Headmistress at Normanhurst.

We talk to Matthew Hagger, Oak-Tree Group Managing Principal, about the exciting year of change that Braeside has gone through.

“ Q: WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST PHYSICAL CHANGES TO BRAESIDE? ”

A: On the junior site in Palmerston Road the School Hall has been extended to create a new large servery area with additional storage and toilets. The entire lower ground floor in the main building has been reshaped to create a new ICT Suite with 18 new desktop PCs, new Art Room and Early Years classrooms. The outside play area has been enlarged, reshaped and resurfaced, and there is a new rear entrance bridge to improve access. Other classrooms inside have been refurbished and the School Office has been relocated.

At the senior site the roof of the large Science Block was removed and replaced with a large Music and Drama Studio with additional peripatetic practice rooms. Many of the rooms have been refurbished and we have installed new desktop computers in the ICT Suite. Work has started to extend what will be the new kitchens and we are aiming for the installation to be completed in time for the launch of our full range of lunches in January 2017.

Q: WHAT OTHER CHANGES HAVE BEEN POPULAR WITH FAMILIES?

A: We've introduced a new scholarship scheme to award several part-scholarships as part of the 11+ entrance process for internal and external applicants. Awards will be made for exceptional ability in the Performing Arts, Sport or academic areas.

The curriculum has been extended with new schemes of work, resources and GCSE syllabi. We now teach Spanish up to Year 9, and from September 2017 it will be offered as another GCSE subject. Full wrap around care is now offered from 7.30am to 6pm with a new range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that are proving to be very popular. Parents with younger children are very happy as we now have a Lower Kindergarten and accept children from age 2½.



Communication has been enhanced with the introduction of our electronic systems. We have a new website and app, and we email, text, tweet and post regularly to our social media outlets.

Q: HOW HAS BRAESIDE BENEFITED FROM BEING PART OF THE OAK-TREE GROUP?

A: As well as being part of strong Group with the resources to make physical improvements, we aim to get our pupils, staff and families from the four schools together as much as possible. Pupils take part in shared learning experiences, inter-school competitions and extra-curricular events such as the Oak-Tree Year 3 overnight Camp, the Oak-Tree Art Exhibition, the Oak-Tree Performing Arts Festival, the Oak-Tree Fireworks Display and the Oak-Tree Summer Ball.

Normanhurst and Braeside have the same timetables so that we can share curricular and extra-curricular activities. For example, our Year 10s are taught together for PE and Drama to benefit both sets of pupils. ■



THE DETAILS

Read more at www.braesideschool.co.uk