

# BACKSTAGE WITH OAK-TREE



Solo performance at the Coopersale Hall Carol Concert

## *We talk creative and performing arts with The Oak-Tree Group of Schools*

**T**he Oak-Tree Schools comprise Braeside in Buckhurst Hill, Coopersale Hall School in

Epping, Normanhurst School in North Chingford, and Oaklands School in Loughton. As well as enjoying an excellent record of academic success, the schools within The Oak-Tree Group are becoming known for providing numerous creative opportunities for their pupils to complement the education and to provide a more rounded education.

Braeside is an all-through school for girls from 2½ to 16 where creative arts are taught all the way through school up to GCSE level. Headmistress Claire Osborn explains, "An appreciation of creativity is a vital part of a child's development. In the Autumn Term our senior pupils took part in a House Drama competition. It was a fantastic showcase of talent with the four Houses putting forward their best actors to perform a play of their choice. The four plays were 'Mean Princesses', 'Peter Pan', 'A Triple Negative' and 'Snow White'. It was a lovely evening enjoyed by friends and families."

Kaye Lovejoy, Headmistress of Coopersale Hall School in Epping, says, "Much work has been put into developing our Performing Arts department this year and the children have been taking advantage of the newly refurbished studio. It's a fantastic space in which they can rehearse for the many shows and performances and there is now a suite of computers to learn the more technical side of music. The junior choir is available for all pupils in Years 3 to 6, and weekly orchestra rehearsals include children who take instrumental tuition as well as those just keen to get involved".

Claire Osborn, also Headmistress of Normanhurst School, comments, "We are incredibly proud of our Art and DT departments. Our pupils are given so many opportunities



### **Braeside pupils at the Performing Arts Club**

throughout the year to use their skills to compete locally and nationally in competitions. Recently some of our pupils' artwork was entered into the ISA National Art Competition alongside some of the best artwork submitted from across the country. It was judged by a team of professional artists and I was delighted that our pupils won awards in two categories – KS3 and KS4 Sketchbook and KS3 and KS4 Photography."

Sue Belej, Headmistress of Oaklands School in Loughton, is aware of the importance of music throughout the school; "Music is a large part of school life at Oaklands. It helps the younger children with their counting, ability to listen and concentrate and social skills. The children have several opportunities throughout the year to perform within the local community. The school choir gathered recently at St Mary's Church on Loughton High Road and I was very proud of the way that our pupils sang so confidently to the large audience, including the local Mayor".

Matthew Hagger, Group Principal of the Oak-Tree Schools, explains, "Over the past few years there has been an emphasis on developing the creative side of the syllabus. Art, Music and Drama now play key parts in the pupils' education both during the normal school day and within our extensive programme of after school and holidays clubs". ■

### **THE DETAILS**

Open Mornings are being held at each of The Oak-Tree Schools between 7 and 10 March 2017. For more information and to book a place visit [www.oaktreeschools.co.uk](http://www.oaktreeschools.co.uk)