

# A Brew with



**Kenzie Smart, Learning Manager**

**Welcome to A Brew with...! Each month, we catch up with an Outwood Family colleague to learn more about them and their career. This month, we caught up with Kenzie Smart, Learning Manager at Outwood Grange Academy!**

**First up, what are you drinking?**

A black forest gâteau hot chocolate, topped with chocolate whipped cream (Hotel Chocolat - of course!)

**When did you first join the Outwood Family?**

I first started at Outwood Grange Academy (OGA) in April 2021 as a Cover Supervisor. I then took on the role of Learning Manager in February 2022.

*"I found my feet very quickly and was welcomed with open arms by all staff."*

**What were your initial thoughts when you began working at Outwood?**

As this was my first experience in a school I found it exciting yet quite overwhelming. OGA is a large school but I found my feet very quickly and was welcomed with open arms by all staff.

**What do you love most about your job?**

Making a difference. I take pride in the relationships I build with my students and the level of respect we have for one another. I find my job the most rewarding when my students have achieved something they once found impossible. I have a fantastic team around me and the support we give each other daily, allows us to do our job to the highest standard.

**What is your favourite memory working at Outwood so far?**

Thank a Teacher Day is my FAVOURITE day of the year! It is amazing to read all of the kind and heartfelt comments that the students have written. This is a brilliant event that promotes positive staff wellbeing around the academy. The best memories aside from this come from my team. We are a very open and supportive team where we have created friendships both in and outside of work that will last a lifetime.

**Is there a particular colleague who you enjoy working with who you'd like to give a shout-out to?**

Richard Larder - Vice Principal and Year 11 SLT Link at OGA. Richard and I have worked together as Learning Manager and SLT Link for two years now and I can always rely on him. Richard is always available to support, no matter how big or small the matter is. He is a voice of reason and often my biggest cheerleader. I always feel supported at work and I couldn't ask for a better person to be the other half of team Year 11!

*"I have learnt so much on my journey at Outwood"*

**What do you think has been the biggest change since you began working at Outwood?**

My knowledge and confidence in my role. I have learnt so much on my journey at Outwood and I have been exposed to situations that have pushed me to achieve some really positive outcomes. The changes to our pastoral team have allowed us to build a great foundation for student success.

**When you're not at work, how do you like to spend your time?**

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family, partner and our Frenchie fur baby, Queenie Boo. I am also a competitive cheerleader and dance coach. I have been cheerleading since the age of three and I now hold over 100 first place Great British Championship titles. This has always been a huge part of my life and I have spent a significant amount of time training for competitions and shows. This has allowed me to travel and build relationships with many people - some of whom I call family. I spend my Saturday mornings teaching dance to young people; sharing my knowledge and experience of the Performing Arts industry following my Honours Degree in Professional Dance and Musical Theatre from Bird College: Conservatoire of Dance and Musical Theatre in London.



**Which three people, dead or alive, would you want to have a brew with?**

First up, Beyonce - I mean, who wouldn't? I admire her values and the opportunities she gives to young performers. She embraces and promotes her youth culture and inspires thousands, perhaps millions, of young mixed-race and black women to unite. Growing up in a mixed family, my mum and I have always been inspired by her music and the values that she promotes.

Andrew Lloyd Webber. He has written some of my all time favourite musicals - one of them being CATS! I would love to have a brew with him to hear the history and process of some of his most infamous works.

Walt Disney. There is something 'magical' about his work. You can read a lot about his life and the making of Disney, but to hear it directly from him would make my younger self so excited. A dream of mine, if I ever do become a mother, would be to take my children to Walt Disney World Resort.

