

## Open Academy Newsletter – 12 July 2024

Dear parents, carers and students

Welcome to the penultimate newsletter of the academic year. I have tried and failed to keep things briefer recently, but I promise from the new academic year I will keep things shorter and sweeter!

This week has been so incredibly busy and it is difficult to know where to start - with England's glorious victory in the semi-finals everything has felt just that bit more positive somehow! So, I will stick to just our three main activities this week, Year 7 camp, Year 10 work experience and Year 6 induction.

As is traditional I joined the Year 7 camp for lunch yesterday (oh, was the fish and chip van there?) to get an update on the fun and games that were ongoing over at Hautbois. Everyone was so busy it was all I could do to catch a few conversations with staff and students. It was great to be able to take our Chair Of Governors, Mr Plater, too and during our visit we heard many stories of adventures thrills and spills – backed up by seeing an absolutely drenched but beaming Mrs Pearsall as she arrived back from a kayaking session to comments like 'you were supposed to be in the boat"! I know Wednesday's fun evening session was held a little earlier so everyone could watch the football and I have seen a video of when England scored. A full fan park experience was had (minus the shower of beer I hasten to confirm) but it looked like everyone had an amazing time. I cannot begin to thank everyone who has made camp possible, as it builds from the fantastic work of Mrs Smith who retired last year. Along with all her regular staff and some new ones, it would not have happened without someone stepping up to take it on, so my greatest thanks to Miss Whitwood who has done a fantastic job taking camp to new heights!

Huge thanks to Dr Davies our careers expert for arranging work experience for Year 10 as it is always a highlight that sees our Year 10 students finish the year on a real high with a big step to maturity. They don't grow down again once they have grown up and seeing them in adult contexts really shows how they are becoming ready for their next steps. I was lucky to visit lots of students doing work and was delighted to see the huge smiles on their faces as they shared tales of being called 'Sir' or 'Miss' and what a great feeling it was to help a child to understand something for the first time. That is very much why we do what we do, but so great to see them experience it. All I spoke to had found new levels of confidence and had found skills they didn't know they had. The only slight disappointment was how tricky it was to find placements and I know lots have missed out this year, so we will need to have a think what we could do about that over their Year 11.

Finally, this week has seen our early transition week, where Year 6 students have joined us for a week of orientation and lessons to ensure that they are ready to hit the ground running in September and any anxieties that may have built up over the summer are already dealt with. It is always joyous to see their lively energetic enthusiasm and this year has been no different. They have had a full range of curriculum tasters from tech lessons and PE to drama, music and all the core subjects. Assemblies every day have covered some introductions to all they need to know and seeing their smiling, albeit tired faces, at the end of the day it looks like they have really enjoyed their opportunity to get settled before the summer break. I hope they have a fantastic final week saying goodbye back in their primary schools next week and then look forward to joining us all next year. Well done Mr Ward and next year's Year 7 team for pulling such a complex transition together so well!

So as traditionally the students finish early on the last day of term we will be saying goodbye to the students at 1.00pm next Friday. It is also traditional that there is little to the final newsletter except for my good wishes for the holiday so that nearly wraps up our year.

Thank you so much for engaging with us – remember I am always happy to hear your views on our communication or any other matters. I will leave you for the final time this year to enjoy the rest of the newsletter

Jon Ford  
Principal

### 1. Sports Day – Monday, 15 July 2024

All students can attend in their full Open Academy PE kit on Monday for sports day. Please make sure students bring their water bottles. It currently looks like the sun might put in an appearance, so hats and sun cream may be needed.

PE Team

### 2. Non Uniform Day – Friday, 19 July 2024

Non-uniform day is on the last day of term - Friday, 19 July. This has been set up on the ParentPay app for the £1.00 donation and proceeds are being split 50/50 between Open Academy Thankfulness Fund and LGBTQ+ Norfolk. Thank you for your support.

Mr Hawkins  
Assistant Head of Year

### 3. Library - Lost & Overdue Books

Just another reminder about student's lost and overdue library books. Please could all books be returned to the library by the end of next week. Any lost books still remaining on students accounts will incur a £2 fine per book. Or you can choose to replace lost books with a new copy or a good quality second-hand one.

Mrs Rogers  
Librarian

### 4. Year 7

It is lovely to write the newsletter this week after an amazing time with the majority of Year 7 at camp. Myself, other staff and the students have had a fantastic week which will remember for the rest of their lives. It was so great to see them on the monkey climb, kayaking, raft building and so much more. I have to say a highlight of mine was watching England win together under the marquee and of course getting the result we need to progress into the final. A big thank you to Miss Whitwood, without her Year 7 camp would not have been possible.

Can you check your child's bags now they have returned, there are a few other students belongings that may be in their bags by mistake. We also have a collection of stuff that has not been taken home, please ask your child to see Mrs Roe or I to see if we have it.



Mr Lambert (Head of Year 7)  
Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 7)

## 5. Year 8

### Year 8 Student Leaders

It has been an incredible year for our Student Leaders, successfully participating in the new student leadership programme and demonstrating so many of our core values in the process. From helping to fundraise over £400 for good causes to helping to plan and run house competitions, our student leaders have been at the forefront of bringing student Leadership to the forefront of Open Academy life. They have also represented the school at the Norwich Holocaust Memorial Day, the Frank Armes Memorial service and showed real bravery and resilience by giving several speeches at special executive meeting held at City Hall. The Year 8 council have also been leading the Student Leader Mentor Scheme and have helped over 10 students in Year 7 feel more happy and comfortable at school. We are extremely proud of them! A big round of applause for our council:

Misha P, Jess T, Freddie M, Ruby P, Charles M, Leo C, Festus A, Kelsie-Rose B, Ella S, Ellie H, Ewan C, Rodrigo F, Sav M and Peter M.

### Helpers for Year 6 Transition

A massive thank you to all our wonderful Year 8s who have so kindly helped out with the Year 6 transition this week. These students have been instrumental in helping the next year's Year 7s settle and feel comfortable and happy in their new surroundings. So many members of staff have commented on how well our students have done. Well done all:

Maisey C, Talula E, Festus A, David D, Ellie H, Jess T, Ruby P, Caitlyn N, Isaac C, Freya S, Callum E, Kelsie-Rose B, Alfie L, Kaelan B, Ella S, Sav M, Lizzie K, Leo C, Misha P, Callum B, Charles M Taylor N, Freddie M and Peter M.

### Top Achievers

Well done to our top fifteen LEARNT achievers this year - each earning over 300 LEARNT points each:

Festus A, Kelsie-R B, Connor B, Jacob C, Angel G, Chakib L, Ava L, Tulisha M, Rosie N-W, Angel N, Destiny O, Samuel R, Cameron S, Freya S and Alexis W.

### Assemblies

All tutor groups have now been created, planned and performed a tutor group assembly to the rest of the year group, exploring and teaching the year about some key core values including team work and aspiration. Standing in front of your peers and talking about a subject is undoubtedly a great achievement and shows a great deal of bravery - it also is a great way to improve oracy skills and prepare our students for a world of work where communication is vital. Thank you to all those who took part and for the tutors who guided their groups to successful assemblies.

### Looking to the future...

As the year draws to a close we grow increasingly excited for a well earned 6 week break and then a new school year with so many important milestones ahead - most notably all Year 9s having to choose their GCSE options!

From all the Year 8 team - have a wonderful weekend!

Mr Dilley and Mrs Clayton (Head of Year 8)  
Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 8)

## 6. Year 9

Students of the week:

Kate S, Harry B, Jayce B and Esme W.

Highest achievement points this week:

Eliza S, Jenson L, Natacha F, Alfie S and Tyler A.

Highest achievement points this half term:

Jenson L, Rianna A, Kate S, Natacha F, Mills C, Deacon B, Rodrigo F, Zena A, Harry B and Eliza S.

Reminder it is sports day on Monday and students need to come to school in correct PE kit (black top and black bottoms).

Mrs Power (Head of Year 9)

Mrs Edwards (Assistant Head of Year 9)

## 7. Year 10

This is the penultimate newsletter before we look towards starting Year 11.

We would like to start off this week by congratulating the students who have completed a work experience placement! Students have now gained a valuable insight into the world of work and have developed essential skills that will benefit them in future careers. We hope that the experience has provided students with a deeper understanding of the world of work. Staff have visited students and seen them acquiring important skills such as communication, teamwork, time management and problem-solving, which will be essential in any profession. It has been a pleasure to see so many of the year group enjoy the experience and feedback from all work placements has been fantastic. Well done!

The remaining students in school have engaged with the activities and a tailored curriculum that has been designed to cater to needs and interests. This has allowed students to develop key employment skills, e.g. CV building, interview skills and exploring potential career paths.

Next week sees feedback from work experience, sports day and PPE2 results. The year team will be on hand to support any student who feels anxious about these results and what it means moving to the next academic year and beyond.

This week we have been able to reflect on students' academic journey so far. Students have undergone a significant transformation from being a nervous and uncertain Year 7s to the confident and driven individual students we see today. Year 10 has been a challenging but rewarding year, students have refined study habits, developed a sense of independence, explored new interests, and learned to balance academic pressures with personal pursuits. We look to the future, feel a sense of excitement and anticipation, knowing that the next chapter of your educational journey is just beginning. We are proud of you all.

Mrs Pearsall & Miss Whitwood (Heads of Year 10)

Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 10)

## 8. Careers

Many congratulations to the Year 10 students who have had an amazing week out on work experience. Students have been out working with a wide variety of companies and organisations and it has been fantastic to see them grow in confidence and maturity. Many employers have offered to take Open Academy students in 2025 and I look forward to working with next year's Year 10 in their search for a worthwhile placement for a memorable week.

Dr Davies  
Careers Guidance and Development

## 9. SEND

Although we will be shut for the summer, there are still many services running throughout the 6 weeks to offer advice and support to children and their families.

1. <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/familyhubs>

This family hub website has links to lots of different places, including the **FYI service** for 11-24 year olds, links for parents/careers and how to get in contact with the **family hub** team.

**Family hubs** can provide information, advice, and guidance to families as soon as there is a worry. They can help any family with a child or young person up to 19-years-old (25 for young people with a special educational need and/or disability).

2. <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40407/Early-help-for-children-and-families>

If you have difficulties in your family, or if you are worried about your children, there are people who can support you. Filling in this form can help the right people to get in touch with you, and let you know what support is out there.

**Early help** is about giving information, advice and guidance to families. They want to help as soon as difficulties start. This is to prevent family worries growing into bigger issues.

Filling in this form can also help you get in touch with the **schools and communities team** - which are a new service supporting schools and families with a child or children with emerging Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

SEND Team