

Open Academy Newsletter – 4 October 2024

Dear parents, carers and students

I am delighted to write to you this week and introduce myself as Vice Principal of Open Academy and Co-Principal in Mr Ford's place on a Friday.

Having started as a history teacher and faculty leader at Open Academy twelve years ago, I have seen the academy go from strength to strength and been amazed at the hard work of our staff and students over the years, that has really put Open on the map as a school of great ambition, care and support for its school community.

Following our busy Year 6 open evening, I was privileged to show some Year 6 families around the academy this week, sharing what our day-to-day provision looks like; teachers welcoming our visitors into the classroom to see supported reading activities in English, improvised peer work in drama, structured preparations for cooking in food technology, skilled source enquiry in history, careful focus on retrieval tasks in science and in particular, our students responding with such warmth and generosity towards our visitors in all areas across the academy.

This week has also been a time for forward planning and preparation for our Year 11 and Year 13 students who attended our study skills event filled with advice and support as they embark on their final year of studies. It was great to see such a high turn-out of students and families during this busy time, when the realisation of exams can feel daunting for all involved. Our 6th Form open evening on the same night was a great way to keep students focussed on the positives and exciting future opportunities also coming their way.

So, here we are, over halfway through this first half term. Now we are into October the wetter and colder days appear and it is good to see more students bringing coats to school and leaving hoodies at home! As tutors begin their uniform and equipment checks next week, thank you for supporting us in making sure students take responsibility for meeting the standards and expectations that we ask and want to see, to ensure all can be successful.

Wishing you a lovely weekend and an exciting week to come, particularly as we welcome the Bishop of Norwich into the academy next Wednesday to officially receive Open Academy into the Church of England. More on that next week!

Miss Wenlock
Vice Principal

1. Upcoming Assessments

Year 7, 8 and 9:

EA1 assessments All Subjects **STARTS THIS MONDAY and THE NEXT 3 WEEKS**

Please use your knowledge organisers to support revision, making your own knowledge organiser and filling in any gaps. Ask your teacher when you find a topic that you don't understand.

Year 11/13: Mock exams 1 All Subjects Week beginning 18 November

Start revision now! Use revision guides and online resources including past paper questions. Ideally 30 minutes per night. Make sure you cover all subjects each week.

Good luck!

Mr Murray (Teacher and Assistant Principal)

2. Year 7

What an amazing group of students we have in our year group. Each and every day it is humbling to see the positivity, enthusiasm for learning and determination to succeed shown by Year 7 students. We are really starting to see the students transforming from a group of different primary school students into some of Open Academy's finest.

Due to this we are now seeing new friendships blossom, old ones ending and disagreements within these groups begin. Although we understand that these rifts can be distressing for our learners it is unfortunately part of growing older and working out who is worthy of our time. We are always available to help support with understanding and empathy in these situations, but sometimes the best solution is to allow space between the students and time for a greater understanding of the situation to develop. If you ever feel that there is an issue or part of the bigger picture we have not noticed then please get in touch with your son/daughter's tutor to help us support.

The Big C of Resilience

Every week in tutor time students will be taking part in an activity promoting resilience. Each week is on one of the 7 Big Cs of resilience (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping, Control).

Last week winners for competence were; Barbara K, Nma MA and Kyra R. Fantastic effort, well done.

Learnt Points - In the last week the year group has received 541 LEARNT points. This is a fantastic achievement. LEARNT points are awarded by members of staff for 5 different reasons; active listening, engaging fully with the learning, giving great feedback by answering questions, being respectful to all, being present and ready for learning, working as a team. Well done everyone and a great show of positive learning.

Positive Praise:

- Delilah PR, who has been seriously impressive in English.
- Catteleya A for her always being polite, helpful, and kind. Also, for her excellent effort in maths.
- Khaleesi A for outstanding reading and explaining maths sentence questions.
- Shout out to most students in 7P, especially Summer, Cleo, Poppy, Honey, Barbara, Nylah, Nma, Noah, Jools, Jenson, Elliot, Ethan and Courtney for being so focused in every lesson on their learning.
- Amazing effort from the whole year group in their behaviour and attitude during the fire drill on Thursday afternoon. You were the best year group out there.

Reminders:

- If possible please add name tags/label your son/daughter's uniform (blazer and PE tops). This will help to ensure they do not go missing and if they do it is easier to return to the rightful person.
- Please can you check your son/daughter's PE kit to ensure they have their own tops.
- You will have received a letter via email about Year 7 camp. This will be taking place in the summer term. If you have not received a 'letter' via email then just ask your son/daughter to pick one up from reception. Year 7 camp is a fantastic opportunity and is highly recommended. To reserve a space, we will require a deposit of £30 paid by 22 October.
- Energy drinks & fizzy drinks of any kind are banned at Open and if seen will be confiscated. If a student refuses to hand one over they will receive a detention.

It is only with your help that each student will make the most of their time at Open. Thank you for your continued support of the learning of your son/daughter, it shows itself every day.

Mr Pickup and Mr Dilley (Co-Heads of Year 7)
Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 7)

3. Year 8

It has been very busy this week finalising the student council and head students, every tutor now has two students to represent their tutor and discuss matters in the Academy with myself, Mr Dilley, Mr Richardson and Mr Ford on a weekly basis.

Our student council are:

Head students – Demarco and Ashanti
Challenge - Hattie and James
Destiny – Chloe and Neveah
Inspiration - Isaac and Ayo
Respect – Finley and Charlie SL

A big thank you to all that applied, keep working hard and more opportunities will open up in the future.

We are starting to plan for our yearly tutor Halloween door decoration competition, if there are any old decorations not needed at home please allow your child to bring them in.

Congratulations to challenge for winning the tutor challenge and Inspiration for winning the best attendance over the last week.

Teacher praise:

- Ben and Alex were awesome helping with Open evening last week – Mrs Power
- Hayden for improved attitude and effort in English – Miss Roberts
- Mackenzie for consistent engagement in English - excellent effort! – Mrs Clayton
- Ben Ed, Ellie Mae B and Alex D for effort with homework – Miss Roberts

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 8)
Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 8)

4. Year 9

A positive week for Year 9 with lots of achievement points given out and I've seen lots of positive conversations happening in form time around careers and options.

Please do ask you child about possible option subjects for GCSE as we are focussing on this on Thursdays. It is important for students to begin looking at what they might do when they leave school at this point as this will give them a direction and something to aim for.

The following received the most LEARN T points this week:

Elizabeth H, Chakib L, Jensyn P, Freya S, Noah C and Betsy K.

We highlight this on Fridays every week and it's a good way of checking on your child's engagement with their learning.

Some individual praise:

- Ben S and Tom W for excellent engagement in English and challenging themselves to offer answers to questions in class - Mrs Clayton
- All students in 9E and 9H for excellent performance in their art assessments this week – Mr Walters
- Peter W gave a piano performance to a Year 7 class, without any prior warning, which took both great courage and skill. He smashed it - Mrs Morgan Hart

A few reminders about uniform and attendance:

- Uniform is generally very good with the year group, but we do ask that all students remove any coats or hoodies before they enter the building. Blazers must also be worn and school trousers only. Joggers are not acceptable. Skirts need to be worn if a student is wearing leggings.
- We understand that there are a few bugs going around but please can we encourage your child to only take time off if absolutely needed as their attendance is vital to their success.
- If you are having any problems with uniform please contact the year team.

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)

Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

5. Year 10

Students of the week:

Olivier K, AJ B, Phoebe E, and Tyler A.

Highest achievement points this week:

Kate S, Rodrigo F and Dylain B.

Highest achievement points this half term:

Ryan B, Alfie S, Ayo T, Riley W and Annalee R.

Mrs Power (Head of Year 10)

Mrs Edwards (Assistant Head of Year 10)

6. Year 11

Thank you to everyone who attended the Study Skills and 6th Form Open Evening. There certainly was a productive and encouraging atmosphere.

Students have been emailed the electronic version of the revision timetable so are now able to make and edit their own, as we progress towards the exams their revision timetable should change to make it work for them. We recommend starting with 25 minutes for each subject increasing after the PPE to work on weaker subject areas.

We are, however, concerned and disappointed that we have received a data report that shows Year 11 have accumulated 3112 late minutes this week. This is a startling 52 hours in lost learning. Some students may tell you that form time in the morning is not important, or turning up 5-10 mins late to lesson is ok, but in reality, they are missing valuable revision time in form and curriculum content in lessons.

We have designed the form programme to incorporate subject specialised revision, which is led by the Heads of Faculty, these are the lead teachers in maths, English, science and academic subjects.

Just a reminder that PPE's start on 11 November.

Shout outs to:

- Daisy H for her efforts in English. She consistently engages in her learning and always works incredibly hard. - Mrs Clayton
- GCSE Music students all working really hard on their practical portfolios. Special shout outs to Chelsea B & Madi P for recording their solo pieces today - Mrs Morgan-Hart
- Well done to year 11 food tech for working hard on their coursework - Miss Luter
- A massive well done to my Year 11 English group, who have engaged fully with their first formal exam question practise this term. Special praise for Kayne B and Max L who missed the preparation lesson but just got straight on with the task - Mrs Napthen
- Louie K for his lovely and precise singing and dancing moves in 'Blood Brother' - Mr Edwards
- Oskar C for outstanding result in maths for his percentage assessment. Lola B for excellent effort with completing all the extra maths revision work - Mrs Marsham

Mrs Pearsall and Mrs Halliday (Heads of Year 11)

Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 11)

7. Chaplain's Update

This Week's Reflection

A while back we had a power cut. It wouldn't had been so bad but, it was right in the middle of a footy fixture I was looking forward to watching. Suddenly, all the lights went out and our house was plunged into darkness. The darkness caused two things to happen. Firstly my 5-year-old son started to cry because of fear the darkness brought. Secondly, in my hurry to get to him to calm him down, I tripped and stumbled on my way up the stairs, because I couldn't see where I was going.

When I got to my son, I calmed him down, reassured him and we both went and got a candle. We lit the candle and immediately the darkness disappeared. I then said to my son, isn't it amazing how such a little light can push back so much darkness. It had a profound effect on me for the rest of the week.

Life is strange sometimes, one day things can be going so well and then something happens and we can be plunged into complete darkness due to many reasons and circumstances. During these times we can feel fearful, and we can stumble and fall wondering which direction to go in.

I want to encourage us today that even during these times there will always be light to introduce into our situations. Light can come from anywhere if we look for it in our friends, our family, words that we read, thankfulness for the positive aspects of our lives and the act of never giving up. A challenge for us all this week is to be a light in someone's darkness. Your encouragement, your words, and actions no matter how small or big can push immense darkness back in the lives of others.

As I went to my son to give him a cuddle, calm his fears and to reassure him as his dad in his place of fear, our heavenly Father who is the light of the world is there with us in the darkest of times. He brings comfort, direction, and confidence. He will hold and carry us in his arms and bring light into all that we are. He is only a prayer away.

In closing the Bible says that the words of God are a lamp unto our feet and a light to our paths.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers. God bless,

Mark

A Norfolk Steps Approach – Understanding Teenage Brain Development



- To reflect on behaviours that you are seeing - what this could mean and how we can respond to it.
- Looking at a range of techniques that could support your teenager.
- Empowering teenagers to communicate and understand their feelings.
- Exploring how to repair and restore relationships.

TUESDAY 22nd October -6.30-7.30pm

Opportunities to ask questions and find further support

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 376 482 324 208

Passcode: LQb3Ta



PARENT CARER



GROUP

NORWICH

for parent carers of children 0-18 who have additional needs / disabilities

CFM/Early Childhood & Families Centre
Hunter Rd, Norwich NR3 3PY
Monday 9 Sept, 14 Oct, 11 Nov & 2 Dec
09.15 -11.15am

Drop-in for chat, advice, support and a cuppa



- hayley.huckle@carersmatternorfolk.org
- maxine.webb@carersmatternorfolk.org
- parentcarersmatternorfolk.org
- facebook.com/parentcarersmatternorfolk

