

Open Academy Newsletter – 24 October 2024

Dear parents, carers and students.

No Friday this week so not a full newsletter!

I do, however, want to apologise that we have not been able to clarify the price rises that are due to come in after half term in the canteen as they are still not finalised. We could guess now, but we really need to wait until the new providers take over on the first day of term - so please watch this space. I will email as soon as term starts with the price lists.

We will ensure all free school meal students are provided with their free meal.

For now, I would just like to just wish you a wonderful half term break.

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Upcoming Assessments

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

You will be assessed on the following sections of each curriculum:

English Language: Paper 1 content

English Literature: Paper 2 content

Maths: Non-calculator paper (Higher) & Calculator paper (Foundation) on all topics covered

Science: Paper 1 for Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Geography: Rivers (12 marks), Changing Cities (30 marks), Weather & Climate (30 marks), Ecosystems (30 marks)

History: Crime & Punishment, Making of America, Nazi Germany, Elizabethan England

Languages: All content taught to date

Food: All content

DT: All content from Year 10

PE: All content from Component 3

Computer Science: Paper 1 Theory

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.

Use resources on Teams to support your revision. Ask your subject teachers for support where it is needed. Good luck!

Mr Murray
Assistant Principal

2. Curriculum Enhancement/Activities Week – Friday, 18 July – Monday, 22 July 2025

“Learning by doing theory is nice, but nothing replaces actual experience.”
Tony Hsieh

Welcome to our first Curriculum Enhancement Week!

During the last few days of the academic year, Open Academy will be holding its first enhancement week where we arrange a variety of activities and opportunities dreamt up by the staff.

The aim of curriculum enhancement week is about improving students’ understanding, skills, values, personal and social development and can act as a vehicle to develop our students’ capacity which motivates them to learn more. This is not only about what they learn, but most importantly, how and where they learn. It also broadens the student experience by expanding their cultural capital, whilst learning more about themselves and one another. It is an opportunity for students to develop new and existing bonds with staff and other students, to increase their self-esteem and sense of adventure by trying something new, and having the prospect of testing out their own character traits and virtues.

All activities are detailed in our booklet attached and choices can be made via the Google Docs link on page 3. Please note that the deadline date for making choices is 18 November 2024.

Mrs Molloy
Head of 6th Form

3. Chaplain’s Update

Care for the Family Website

Please see below a link to a supportive website dealing with family issues and family life amongst other things

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/support-for-you/family-life/parent-support/>

This Week’s Reflection

I want to start this week’s reflection with a quote from the Bible and it says this:

So, let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.

So many times we can get tired and stressed through what we do and all that the world throws at us. The first thing that takes a back seat when this happens, is doing good to others. I want to encourage you to keep doing the good that you are doing because it affects generations for the good. Your goodness pushes darkness away, your goodness changes lives and your goodness saves lives.

So, when you feel bad, do good and see a change come along in your circumstances. It comes back in blessings and goodness. It never fails to happen.

Have a wonderful half term. God bless.

Mark

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal success. This guide provides practical strategies for parents and educators to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

1 ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Regularly engaging children in open dialogue fosters trust and emotional expression. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings freely without judgment. Set aside time daily, perhaps during dinner, to ask open-ended questions such as, "What's made you happy today?". This encourages children to express themselves openly.

2 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Children often learn how to manage emotions by observing adults. By modelling calm and positive responses to challenges, you can teach them valuable emotional management skills. If you've had a difficult day, verbalise how you're feeling and explain how you plan to handle it, such as "I'm a bit worked-up, so I'm going for a walk to clear my mind."

3 TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Helping children break down challenges into manageable steps encourages a proactive mindset. Explain that every problem has a solution, even if it's not immediately obvious. For example, if a child is stuck on homework, support them in breaking the task into smaller steps, saying things like "Let's focus on just this first question for now."

4 FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Encourage young people to view mistakes as learning opportunities. A growth mindset helps them see setbacks as part of the process, rather than something to be upset about. After a child loses a game or performs poorly on a test, for example, ask them what they've learned from the experience. This reinforces the idea that effort – and even failure – leads to improvement.

5 PROMOTE SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Teaching children about self-care helps them understand the importance of balancing work with relaxation to maintain emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers could start a screen-free hour before bedtime where the family engages in relaxing activities like reading, setting an example to the child for how to unwind.

6 BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships with peers and adults provide a support system that enhances resilience. Encourage positive, respectful interactions to develop social skills. Playdates or group activities can be instrumental in teaching children how to resolve conflicts with friends by modelling and practicing calm communication.

7 SUPPORT EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Helping children to identify and name their emotions allows them to manage those feelings more effectively. When a child's upset, encourage them to talk to you about what they're feeling in an empathetic and supportive manner, and ask them why they might be experiencing these emotions.

8 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

Giving children opportunities to make their own decisions boosts confidence and problem-solving skills. A good example of this would be letting children choose and pack their own lunches for school, guiding them with options but allowing them to assume responsibility for the task to help them take ownership.

9 DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

Teaching children techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing or journaling can help them to manage stress. Show them how to perform breathing exercises when they're feeling anxious, and practise this regularly. Reinforcing this behaviour in young people will make it easier for them to use these techniques of their own accord during stressful moments.

10 CELEBRATE SMALL WINS

Recognising effort, no matter how small, reinforces perseverance and encourages children to keep trying. After a child completes a difficult task, makes progress on a project or reaches another type of personal goal, praise their efforts. Emphasise the hard work they've put in and be sure to let them know how proud you are!

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provisions.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



[Wellbeing for children \(6 -12 years\) | Child anxiety symptoms | PTSD in Children | RISE](#)

The webpage provides resources to support the emotional wellbeing of children aged 6-12, addressing anxiety, PTSD, and behavioural changes. It offers activities for parents to help children express their feelings, such as using worry jars and practicing breathing exercises.

The page also highlights the importance of maintaining playful and empathetic communication (using the PACE model) and recommends books to aid emotional discussions. Additionally, it includes helpful links to wellbeing services and tools for parents.