

## Open Academy Newsletter – 17 January 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Students, welcome to this week's newsletter.

This week it has been a privilege to host a wide range of visitors to the academy and to showcase what we do.

I would like to thank the English team for hosting a group of 21 students from the UEA PGCE course, who have been in the Academy for two days this week to look at the great teaching in our English and Communication faculty. Indeed, it is the excellence of our English teaching which prompted UEA to ask if their group of English teacher trainees could spend a couple of days seeing what we do here at Open.

Feedback from the visit has been fantastic, with the students being inspired by what we (our English team) do every day.

What thrills me is that I know we have exemplary practice throughout all faculties in the Academy, and that any one of them would be able to provide a similarly inspirational experience for new teachers. So, well done to Mr Coyne for organising this experience and for the day-to-day brilliance of all our teaching staff, in this instance, especially English and drama.

We were also privileged yesterday to host the Regional Schools Director, Mr Jonathan Duff and his colleague from the DfE, along with our trust CEO Mr Oliver Burwood. It was great to be able to discuss not just the key strategies we use to ensure all students get a great education at Open, as I am sure will be the central topic of most of his conversations with school leaders, but, as importantly, all the extras that our team at Open deliver in order to ensure that we are a genuinely inclusive school, consistent with our aim to see every child as a blessing. We endeavour to 'meet' students where they are emotionally, socially and even spiritually.

As young people struggle with the lingering effects of lockdown and many in our community continue to feel the challenges of austerity, there has never been a more important time for schools to do all they can to support the students personally. I am incredibly proud of the fantastic pastoral and safeguarding teams here at Open, who deliver so much support throughout the school day.

I explained about our green card system and our ways to connect students with support during the school day whatever their challenges. We talked about the various support centres we deliver in the academy, such as Open Pathways and the OLC (Open Learning Centre) and we visited our exceptional SRB (Specialist Resource Base) as examples of genuine inclusion in action. Once more I could not have been prouder of both staff and students

So, please enjoy the rest of our newsletter as we reflect on the Open Academy aim '...to become a beacon of success in inclusive education...'

Jon Ford  
Principal

## 1. Duke of Edinburgh

I am looking for a volunteering opportunity for 7 to 12 students for about 1 hour a week, (although we could be flexible with time), this would be during the school day and a member of staff will accompany students.

We are looking to do some charitable work and improve the lives of people in our community, so for example something like helping out at day centre for the elderly or maybe painting or gardening to improve facilities for a charitable group.

If your workplace could accommodate us or you know a charity who could use our help please contact [ruth.pearsall@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:ruth.pearsall@open-academy.org.uk)

Mrs Pearsall (Teacher):

## 2. Upcoming Assessments

Year 11: Mock Series 2 All Subjects Week Beginning - 3 March 2025  
English: Romeo & Julliet, A Christmas Carol + language paper 2 (non-fiction)  
Maths: All content (2 papers - calculator and non-calculator)  
Science: Paper 2 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (See Teams Classnote for content breakdown)  
Geography: Coasts, development, managing resources, urban fieldwork, coastal fieldwork, UK challenges  
History: All 4 topics  
Languages: All content  
Food: All content  
DT: All content  
Textiles: Practical skills assessment  
Sport: All of component 3  
RS: 2 paper - Christianity and Islam  
Computer Science: Paper 2 content (programming)

Keep revising! 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 Classnote to support your revision. Please see video on how to revise which can be shared with your student.

Ask your subject teachers for support where it is needed.

Good luck!  
Mr Murray (Teacher)

## 3. Revision

Year 11 Science revision:

Week 3: 13–19 Jan 2025

- Biology: Organisation: heart, lungs, and blood vessels.
- Chemistry: Chemical changes: reactivity series, acids and bases.
- Physics: Electricity: circuits, current, and resistance.
- Tasks:
  - Watch revision videos (BBC Bitesize/Seneca).
  - Complete one set of topic-based past questions.

Week 4: 20–26 Jan 2025

- Biology: Organisation: digestive system, enzymes.
- Chemistry: Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter.
- Physics: Energy efficiency, National and global energy resources.
- Tasks:
  - Create flashcards for key definitions and equations.
  - Attempt calculation-based questions for Physics.

For Year 11 Computer Science Revision:

The first Comp Science exam (13 May) is less than 4 months away! If your child is stuck on what to revise here is some suggestions:

Week 3: 13– 19 Jan 2025

- Topics:
  - J277/01:
    - Data storage: Binary addition, hexadecimal, ASCII.
    - Compression: Lossy vs. lossless, advantages/disadvantages.
  - Tasks:
    - Solve binary addition problems with carry-over.
    - Create a table comparing lossy and lossless compression.

Week 4: 20th – 26th Jan 2025

- Topics:
  - J277/01:
    - Networks and topologies: LAN/WAN, factors affecting performance.
    - Network hardware: Routers, switches, NIC, DNS, the Cloud.
    - Network protocols: TCP/IP, HTTP, FTP.
  - Tasks:
    - Draw diagrams of star and mesh topologies.
    - Practice describing the purpose of key protocols.

KS3 Science in Spring 1:

We have had a lot of buzz around our science labs this week with all of our lesson routines returning. Our Year 7s have started a new unit on Cells, this week a lot of them have had the opportunity to start building skills in using our microscopes to view specialist cells.

In Year 8 they have started their Spring 1 topics focusing on careers as a *Soil Scientist*, *Histologist* and as a *Green-Energy Salesman/Engineer*. Each of these topics link the national curriculum into practical skills and thinking practices for each career.

Finally in Year 9 they are currently working through our teacher module. In this module they look at how science is essential and applied within various other subjects from History to English and Geography to PE.

Mr Wilgress (Teacher)

#### 4. Year 7

It has often been said by members of staff that this year group is one of the best in the school. I wholeheartedly agree with this. There is a great sense of community with the year group, with each tutor group/teaching group having their own distinctive dynamic. We currently have 110 students in Year 7 with just a few who are often struggling with the rigours of school life.

#### The Big Cs 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 and Control).

Last week's winners were INSPIRATION with the whole tutor group demonstrating the best example of Contribution, a fantastic effort by all, well done.

#### Positive Praise

I ask members of staff to share some positivity they have witnessed from the Year group, below is what they have said:

Jack S and Maso P have been fantastic in Spanish this week.

Khaleesi A for consistent and outstanding effort in English.

Kendal, Delilah and Stanley are outstanding artists and their effort level matches this. Already working at almost GCSE level.

Fantastic work has been taking place in music lessons with students designing their own instruments.

#### Reminders

- If your son/daughter is not in full correct uniform (blazer, shirt, tie, trousers, skirt, shorts, black shoes) they will be given a 30-minute detention to complete at the end of the day. If there is a genuine reason for any problems with this in the morning please send a note in with your child to hand in to the Year Office.
- Every Wednesday from 3pm we have a homework club in a computer room to help those complete any outstanding homework.
- Don't forget about Year 7 camp. If you haven't signed up yet, then we highly encourage you to do so. It will be a week that will create memories that your son/daughter will remember and talk about for years to come. It is a chance to experience lots of things with their peers. This helps develop their social skills and develop/foster positive relationships. You can apply for funding from Anguish Educational Foundation. They have part funded many students in the past to take part in the camp. Any questions about this please get in contact with the year team.
- 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 (Head of Year 7)

Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 7)

#### 5. Year 8

It is great to see all Year 8 students back into the swing of it now being back, time is flying and in just four weeks it will be half term. So many have come back and showed our core values. I am very proud to have received so much positive feedback about Year 8 classes and their work ethic recently.

Last week Year 8 attendance was excellent, this week we have seen a drop, there has been a lot of sickness about but, attendance is paramount to your child's success in school. For example, 90% sounds

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high for attendance, but that means 4 weeks missed in an academic year, which is not far off a half term and possibly a whole unit in a subject. Let's do all we can to start to see the attendance increase in Year 8 and the whole school.

Year 8 have their quarter final league match against City Academy Norwich, on Thursday, 23 January after school, the team sheet will go up on Tuesday next week.

A reminder that all students must have their blazer on in the academy, consequences will be put on the system if they are not wearing them. If there are any issues, please get in touch with the year team.

8M1 Maths have been fantastic at probability all getting good scores in their progress task this week - Mrs Power

Great work from 8P in science and their first lesson on electrical circuits – Mr Lambert

Charlie S and Joel M for their effort in the 12 minute cooper run in PE – Mr Wilkinson

The whole of 8O English for brilliant engagement with attendance trainee teachers and fantastic responses.

Jamilojou for great work in Spanish – Mrs McEvoy

A big well done to my whole English class 8H, who engaged so enthusiastically during lessons with our visiting teachers this week. They approached all the tasks maturely and I received lovely, positive feedback about their involvement - Mrs Napthen

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

## 6. Year 9

Year 9 continue their positive return to school after the Christmas break. Attendance is still relatively good, but we are keen to maintain this for the rest of the year so please support us in this. The students have been shown direct evidence of how much impact good attendance can have on their progress.

The following students achieved the most LEARNT points this week:

Lincoln W, Talula E, Aaliyah, Jacob C and David D.

Well done to these students.

Just a reminder that, as per the school policy, mobile phones should not be seen during the school day including lunch and break. If you need to contact your child urgently, please contact the office and we will relay any messages. Phones are a significant distraction in school and can harm a child's progress so please can we ask for your support in this matter. If a student continues to use their phone in school and refuses to put it away, this may result in us having to contact you to put in place a phone ban.

It is great to see the vast majority in correct uniform this week but I have asked tutors to send emails to those who are missing an item. If you are having a problem obtaining an item of uniform please contact your child's tutor in the first instance and we will be happy to assist.

Some individual praise this week.

Lucy H and Kaydee H deserve a mention as do Leo and Kim who showed off their speaking skills in front of the whole class – Mrs Blackburn

90 English for excellent DNA responses. Swift and thorough - Mr Edwards

Iris B, Hannah K, Charles M, Ella S, Ethan T, Ben S, Thomas W, Talula E, Chakib L, Noah C, Jensen O, Kara M, Shanelli K, Tulisha M, Jennifer B, Lily AP, Angel G, Elizabeth C, Freya S, Elizabeth H, Dre B, Logan W, Jake C, Jacob C, Jensyn P, Lucas B and David D are all an absolute joy to teach in history. Keep up the amazing focus and enthusiasm for the subject - Mr Pickup

Massive well done to Chakib, Thomas W & Kara for getting the highest marks of the year in their recent drama assessments - Mrs Ormosi

Peter M for effort and presentation in English – Miss Roberts

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)

Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

## 7. Year 10

The year team would like to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding effort demonstrated by our Year 10 students during their exams this week. Their commitment, resilience, and positive attitude have been truly impressive.

Year 10 Parents evening is Tuesday, 11 February where teachers will discuss students attainment and progress.

Highest achievement points this week:

Dylain B, Jayce B, Riley B, Olivier K, Max S, Luke S, Kayden S, Alfie S, Ayo T and Riley W.



Year 10 textiles this week.

Mrs Power (Head of Year 10)

Mrs Edwards and Mrs Hindry (Assistant Heads of Year 10)

## 8. Year 11

Well done Year 11 for a great week – it was brilliant to see so many of you at the parents evening on Tuesday. As we move closer to the exams, it is vital that we keep an open dialogue between student, teacher and home and encourage you all to come and speak to me or Mrs Lamb if you have any questions, need support/have concerns, or celebrate any mini victories you have in the final straight to exam day.

We are seeing some improvement in attendance, and since September the year group has amassed over 13,475 LEARNT points – a real tribute to how the Year Group has taken on the challenge of this vital year of education. As a year group you should be proud of your achievements so far. We are very proud of you! We also continue to receive comments from across the school about how hard working and good you are in lessons – well done! Keep up the hard work and keep following those LEARNT behaviours. You have just

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over 100 days left before the official exam season starts – let's make the most of every day and get you the results you deserve.

## Key Stats

### Attendance

This week – 86.2% (up 2% on last week – well done – this is the way it needs to go!)

Since start of September – 86.4%

National Average – 91.9%

Being in school and learning is so important for your present and future success – if your attendance drops below 89% you risk doing serious harm to your education and prospects – being in school and in lessons is crucial for your future success! Do you know what your current attendance is? If not, ask and if it is low work with us to help improve it.

### Tutor Competition

Congratulations to Mr Mundy and his form who won the Tutor Competition this week! So close to the national average – well done.

11 ABR – 79%

11 ERO – 85%

11KMU – 87.9%

11 NST – 90.5%

**Rewards** – These are awarded by members of staff for 5 different reasons; active listening, engaging fully with learning, giving great feedback by answering questions, being respectful to all, being present and ready for learning, working as a team. For the last 5 days the total amount of learnt points achieved is **a brilliant 630**. This is fantastic and represents how well you are doing and is a great show of positive learning.

### Praise

We asked members of staff to share some positivity they have witnessed from the Year group this week, below is what they have said:

Well done to Harrison Y, Harvey N and Jacob D who got a shout out from the boxing coach at Hustle, Harrison and Harvey for 110% commitment and effort and Jacob for excellent progress - Mrs Pearsall

Mahoosive praise for Martina and Joshua in German who slayed their mock exam - Mrs McEvoy

David C, Alex P, Kyran, Ayo and Finn deserve a mention for their vocab recall skills - Mrs Blackburn

Outstanding effort from Amy T, Rebecca S, Daisy, Maisi, Ivan, Georgia, and Olivia – Mr Walters

### Important Notices/Reminder

**Lates** – all minutes you miss of lessons will be added up and then made up on a Friday. Again, being in class from the start of each and every lesson is so very important for you achieving your full potential in May/June - so expect us to be hard on this.

**Truancies** (2 in a week = truancy IE). Again, missing lessons is NOT an option – 2 truancies in one week will lead to a truancy IE.

**Uniform** – Being smart and presentable is an important part of being ready to learn. Please make sure you come to school in the correct uniform – please check the website if you need guidance of what is required.

If you wish to know about your child academically, please contact the year team or your child’s teachers, and we would be happy to discuss your child’s progress! It is only with your help that each student will make the most of their time at Open. Thank you so much for your support, it really makes a difference, and we are so grateful for it.

Mr Dilley (Head of Year 11)  
Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 11)

### 9. 6<sup>th</sup> Form

### Year 12 PPE

Well done to Year 12s who have been completing their PPE exams this week. I have seen some excellent examples of individual and group revision in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form area! Parents – please see below an info sheet on how to support your child with their PPE exams.

## Helping to develop Resilience

Information for parents and carers

### Did you know?

Resilience is one of the greatest of attributes and learning how to be resilient can take our young people far. As Nelson Mandela said, ‘Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.’

Your son/daughter will have to deal with a number of knockbacks when they are in Key Stage 5 as they prepare for their final exams – it is important to do everything that we can to ensure that they perform to the best of their ability.

### What can you do?

There are three areas you can help them with: Stamina, Preparing to Perform and Power to Perform.

**Stamina**  
It is important that your son/daughter is able to handle the pressure of writing and thinking for a long period of time. Mocks (sometimes called PPEs) are important because it is similar to the real experience in the summer. Do encourage them to take these exams seriously – as if they were the real thing. Encouraging them to plan their revision is also really helpful.

**Power to Perform**  
Health and physical wellbeing is also really important. It is helpful if students can eat the type of food that will give them energy through an exam. If they eat lots of sugar before exams, their energy levels can easily drop in the exam. We have recipes and suggestions of appropriate snacks which will keep their energy levels consistent.

We have an accompanying Prepare to Perform leaflet for you.

**Prepare to Perform**  
Leading up to mocks/PPES or external exam periods, it is important that they are able to sleep well, switch off from work at least an hour before they go to sleep and keep their phones at a distance. The glare of phone screens does not aid restful sleep. One of the most helpful things you can do for your child is to help them get into a good winding down routine.

**In summary:**

1. Being a role model	6. Sleep patterns - keep regular
2. Help them set goals	7. Unplugging phones & devices
3. Keep them active	8. Staying cool and calm
4. Healthy eating	9. Belief
5. Time out	10. Be supportive



## Year 13 UCAS

The absolute final deadline is fast approaching. There are only a handful of students that have not completed and sent off their applications as yet – please keep pushing and get this done ASAP. You are almost there!

## Hustle Boxing

I currently only have two Year 12 students joining us for this trip. Please don't let poor Bailey & Steve be on their own! Come and see me if you would like a letter.

## Ed Balls Visit

What an exciting week next week for the Academy. On Friday, 24 January, Kelsey will be interviewing Ed Balls, British politician, broadcaster and economist.

Mrs Molloy (Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form)  
Dr Davies (Assistant Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form)

## 10. Chaplain's Update



The past cannot be changed, the present can be painful at times, but we have a hope for the future. The future is bright, blessed and full of opportunities.

## A Prayer

*Dear God*

*Help me realise that I cannot change the past, but I can look to the future. Help me to know that my future does not depend or rely on the past, so now I can live in freedom and hope.*

*In Jesus name I ask*

*Amen*

God bless. Mark