

Open Academy Newsletter – 24 January 2025

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

Things are usually tough at this time of year with the height of illnesses and health issues, but I am pleased to see that both staff and students are gritting their teeth and battling through, or, at least where the bugs get too much for us, that absence is being kept to a minimum. For students this is crucial as any missed learning can be costly, especially for Year 11 and 13, and I know staff too are most conscious of the knock-on effects when we are absent in having to lean on colleagues. I know these feelings first-hand, as I write this from home having been ill myself for the last 2 days.

As ever though, illnesses in winter and challenges in preparing for exams and all the other difficulties we face in life are also opportunities to build resilience. I particularly like the old saying that "experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted" and it does seem like we are gaining lots of experience at the moment.

On that note I would like to apologise that we have struggled to find a permanent replacement for Mrs Morgan-Hart in music. The positive news is that we have made a good appointment, however, they will not be available until Easter. We are doing all we can to find expertise to help, particularly for Year 11 students to continue to prepare effectively for their exams this year. I will try to keep you informed as things develop on this issue.

The Year 11 early pre-public exam results have been shared now, and it is clear that there is still much to do between now and their final mocks and the real thing. These exams are crucial in us identifying areas the students need to focus on so all should be clear where they should be putting their focus over the next few months. It is vitally important that all students attend regularly, but for Year 11 their attendance is also required in the Hub sessions that are put on specifically for them after school. These Hub sessions are delivered as extras by the teaching staff to help and support students supplement their in-lesson learning – past evidence shows that regular Hub attendance is crucial in attaining target grades. I am delighted that so many already are attending regularly, however some are not so let me be very clear. Year 11 are expected to attend Hub every night – they are lessons on their timetable, they are not optional!

I think with that I will stop and let everyone enjoy the rest of the newsletter. I look forward to being back in the academy next week as being ill is incredibly boring!

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Year 10 PPE1

On behalf of my exam team, I would like to commend our Year 10 students for their fantastic performance during last week's mock exams. They were respectful and adhered to the rules exceptionally well. The staff have been diligently marking these exams, and we will be ready to share the results and provide feedback to the students next week.

A report will be sent home to parents and guardians by the beginning of February, ahead of the parents' evening on 11 February. This parents' evening appointments will be available next week on your Arbor app. If you have any issues logging in, please contact your Head of Year team.

Mr Fisher (Assistant Principal)

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

Revision topics for the upcoming week in Combined Science:

1	20th Jan – 26th Jan 2025	Organisation: heart, lungs, and blood vessels	Atomic structure, The periodic table	Energy stores, Conservation of energy, Energy transfers	Summarize key concepts in a notebook; attempt calculation-based questions for Physics.
2	27th Jan – 2nd Feb 2025	Infection and response: communicable diseases	Bonding, structure, and properties of matter	Electricity: circuits, current, and resistance	Create flashcards for bonding and circuit components; complete one set of topic-based past

Revision topics for the upcoming week in Computer Science:

27th Jan – 2nd Feb 2025	Systems architecture: CPU components, fetch-execute cycle	Computational thinking: Abstraction, decomposition	Create flashcards for CPU components; solve 2 algorithm pseudocode questions
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Mr Wilgress (Teacher)

4. Year 7

As always, the year group is progressing well, constantly demonstrating how resilient they can be and how determined they are to consistently be the best year group in school. This is obvious each and every morning when we gather as a group in the mornings. Every student is dressed smartly and ready for the day ahead.

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

A very busy week with a football and netball fixture, both resulting in wins, some Year 8 played a year up for the Year 9 team and won 20-8. Year 8's won their quarter final against City Academy in a competitive game 4-2 with goals from Harvey x2, Demarco and Hayden P, the man of the match goes to Ky V for his solid defence.

This week my assembly was on the effects of smart phone use on high school students, I watched a channel 4 documentary Swiped: The School that Banned Smartphones. It was done with a group of Year 8 students and they agreed with school and their parents to lock their smartphones away for 21 days, I really recommend watching it. I talked about the benefits of the experiment and how the students had a 21% drop in anxiety, all on average slept one hour more, 18% reduction in symptoms related to depression and 3% improvement to their working memory. It was great to see the reaction of the Year 8s and with four deleting TikTok or Snapchat by the end of the day, I hope they haven't reinstalled it already.

Can we please remind students that hoodies are not to be worn in the academy, consequences will be put on for those that continue to wear them.

Well done to Destiny again for being the best tutor for attendance and winning the tutor challenge.

Teacher Praise

Amalie T for great work in Gymnastics - Miss Trail

Morgan S for having a positive attitude to his studies in English.

Ben E for being consistently hardworking in English.

Alessia P for effort in assessment.

Elise S for making a great start in a new class... and for being so cheerful and positive!

Well done to Tegan P who got the highest mark of Year 8 in their drama work. Also, Lily H, Ben E, Lacey - Mae, Teja and Amalie who weren't far behind.

Jack SH for great work in Spanish – Mrs McEvoy

Harrison B and Morgan S for excellent working out using good clear methods in maths.

Elli-Mae B for excellent work in gymnastics - Mrs Pearsall

Big well done to our Year 8s Bianca, Alessia, Ameera and Jess who played up a year against Year 9s last night. The girls did not let the age stop them taking home a huge win of 20 - 8. Congratulations girls, your hard work is paying off. Can't wait for the rest of the season - Miss Trail and Mrs Pearsall



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

6. Year 9

Some praise from teachers for year 9 this week:

Excellent working out using good clear methods in maths for Batoul S, Alfie L, Zinedine O - Mrs Marsham
Maisey C for excellent effort in German - Mrs McEvoy
Rowan G for excellent script reading out loud in English – Mr Edwards

Top achievers this week:

Sav M, Ben H and Callum B.

It is school policy that mobile phones are switched off and out of sight when in the building. Can I ask that you support the school with this as we do not want it to affect your child's learning.

Apologies for repeating myself, but I must reiterate that the school uniform is compulsory to wear and all students must bring their blazer to school. If there is a problem with this e.g.- it is lost or damaged, please can I ask that you contact the year team so that we can help. If a student is continuously in incorrect uniform we may have to issue a sanction.

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)
Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

7. Year 10

Students of the Week

Oliver N, Evie D, Esme W

Top Achievement points this week

Tyler A, AJ B, Dylain B, Ryan B, Trixie B, Jayce B, Ross B, Jasmin C, Evie D, Natcaha F, Olivier K, Zak L and Sasha MP, Annalee R, Kayden SH, Alfie S, Ayo T, Lena W and Riley W.

Top achievement points for Jan 2025

Tyler A, AJ B, Dylain B, Ryan B, Jayce B, Ross B, Rusne B, Olivier K, Zak L, Annalee R, Kayden SH, Alfie S, AYO T, Lena W and Riley W.

Work Experience

It is essential that we have all green work experience forms returned as soon as possible so the relevant checks can be done for safety reasons. The initial deadline was Christmas. If you are struggling to find suitable work experience with your child we are currently supporting others with a career mentor on a Monday in the academy, together with support from Dr Davies and the year team. The new deadline is 24 February for work experience forms.

Reminder

Parents evening – Tuesday, 11 February

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 super week as we reach the halfway stage of this half term. With only 100 days left until the first exam on the 5 May, 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 14,086 LEARNT points – a real tribute to how the year group has taken on the challenge of this vital year of education - you should be proud of your achievements so far. Remember what I said in the assembly – with aspiration and expectation, you all have the potential to achieve your dreams and ambitions. So think on this weekend – what do you want to achieve in the next 6 months and how can you get there – remember we are here to help!

Rewards

These are awarded by members of staff for 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. For the last 5 days the total amount of learnt points achieved is **a brilliant 590**. 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 the Curriculum Year 11 DofE group for their participation in a session with the Community Sports Foundation, CSF, the coaches spoke highly of their attitude and enthusiasm - Mrs Pearsall

Tyler H for improved attitude – Mrs McEvoy

Thomas H for some really good verbal answers in English, showing much depth of knowledge - Mr Edwards

So proud of Ellie this morning. She's worked so hard and done all of this. Drawings by hand, drawings on photoshop and stencils ready to layer screen print - Miss Rednall



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.

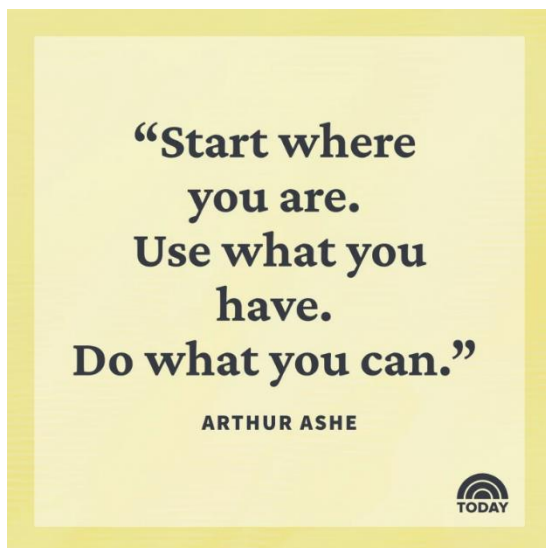
Truancies (2 in a week = truancy IE **until 4pm**). Again, missing lessons is NOT an option – 2 truancies in one week will lead to a truancy IE. Please remember if you are struggling then you **MUST** come to the Year Office! We can help.

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. Chaplain’s Thought for the Week



God bless. Mark



Have your say!

Help us to improve our support
and services for children and
young people with SEND.

