

# The *Open* Way

COURAGE IN EVERY STEP, FAITH IN EVERY JOURNEY

*“Take courage”*

MATTHEW 14:27

FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2026 | AUTUMN TERM

## Welcome Back

Dear Families

Welcome back to Open Academy. I hope you had a happy summer together as a family.

It has been a joy to see our students return this week. They have come back smart, polite and ready to learn. Thank you for getting them ready so well.

I hope everyone feels rested after the break. We are excited about the year ahead.

## Life in All Its Fullness

This week every year group had a welcome back assembly.

Our theme came from a promise in the Bible. Jesus said: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” *John 10:10*

We asked our students a simple question. What does a full life look like at Open Academy? It is not something they wait for. It starts now. It is built in every lesson, every corridor and every kind word.

We shared three things that help them live it:

- **Aspiration** — aim high, and believe you can get there.
- **Perseverance** — keep going, even when the work feels hard.
- **Respect** — treat every person and every space with care.

Our vision comes from Matthew 14:22–33. Peter steps out of the boat and walks towards Jesus. He is frightened, but he takes courage and goes anyway. That is what we ask of our students. Take one brave step, every single day.

## Year 7 Parent Event — Tuesday 15 September

---

**Tuesday 15 September | 5.00pm – 6.00pm | Open Academy**

If your child is in Year 7, please come along. This is our first family event of the year and we would love to see you.

### Miss Luter will launch Year 7 Camp

Year 7 Camp is a wonderful opportunity for your child. It is a chance to try new things, make new friends and grow in confidence away from the classroom. For many students it becomes one of the best memories of their school life.

Miss Luter will explain what the camp involves and how your child can take part. Please come with your questions.

### Meet our senior and pastoral staff

Senior leaders and pastoral staff will also be there. They will be happy to talk about how your child is settling in to high school.

Starting Year 7 is a big step. If something is worrying you, or you simply want to know how the first two weeks have gone, this is the perfect time to ask. No question is too small.

## Our Expectations This Term

---

The start of the year is the right time to be clear about what we expect. High standards help every child feel safe, settled and ready to learn. We are grateful for your support with all four points below.

### Uniform

Please make sure your child wears full Open Academy uniform every day. Uniform matters because it says we all belong here, whatever our background.

Please write your child's name in blazers, coats and PE kit. It makes lost items much easier to return. If buying any part of the uniform is difficult for your family, please contact us in confidence. We will help, and nobody will be judged.

### Attendance

Being in school every day is the single biggest thing your child can do to succeed. Our aim for every student is to attend as close to 100% as possible.

It is easy to think a day here and there does not matter. It does. A child at 90% attendance misses half a day of school every week. Over one year that adds up to about four whole weeks of lost learning.

- **If your child is unwell** — please telephone the academy before 8.30am on each day of absence.
- **Holidays** — please book holidays outside term time. We are not able to authorise term-time holidays.
- **If getting your child in is hard** — please talk to us early. We would much rather help than wait.

## Punctuality

Our day begins with line-up at 8.30am. Students should be on site and ready before then.

Arriving late is a difficult way to start the day. Students miss the start of learning and often feel flustered. Just five minutes late every day adds up to more than three days of lost learning across the year.

## Phone Pouches

Our phone pouches continue this year, and we have seen the difference they make. Break times are noisier in the best way. Students talk more, play more and fall out less.

The rule is simple. Phones go into the pouch at the start of the day. The pouch stays closed until the end of the day. Your child keeps their phone with them the whole time.

If you need to get a message to your child during the day, please ring the academy office and we will pass it on straight away. If there is an emergency, we will always get your child to you.

## 100 Miles for the Thankfulness Fund

Mr Stephen and Mrs Pearsall are taking on a huge challenge. They are cycling 100 miles to raise money for the academy's Thankfulness Fund, which supports our students here at Open Academy.

One hundred miles is a very long way. It will take training, teamwork and a great deal of perseverance — exactly what we ask of our students. Please join us in wishing them both the very best of luck.

**You can support them here:** [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/open-academy](https://justgiving.com/crowdfunding/open-academy)

Every donation, however small, makes a difference. Thank you.

## Stories from the Summer

### Mr Hawkins at the British Grand Prix



Over the summer, Mr Hawkins was at Silverstone for the Formula 1 British Grand Prix — not as a spectator, but as a marshal, trackside.

Mr Hawkins has been a marshal for over 17 years. In that time he has been chosen to work at events all over Europe, including Formula 1 races in Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as Formula E and GT racing.

He wanted to share this with our families for a reason. If your child loves motorsport, marshalling is a brilliant way in — and it is closer than you might think. Young people can start from age 11 as a Cadet Marshal, helping with duties away from the track, such as in the assembly area and paddock.

**Find out more:** [marshals.co.uk](https://marshals.co.uk) | [motorsportuk.org/volunteers/marshals](https://motorsportuk.org/volunteers/marshals)

It is a good reminder for our students. Aspiration is not only about exam results. It is about finding something you love and giving it everything.

## A Golden Summer for Jak



We were delighted to hear from the family of Jak who joins our new Year 7 this term.

In July, Jak competed at the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Junior World Championships in Wolverhampton. He won gold in both of his categories — Gi and No-Gi — making him a double world champion.

That does not happen by luck. It comes from years of early mornings, hard training and getting back up after every setback. Jak, we are extremely proud of you, and we cannot wait to see what you do next. Well done.

A very warm welcome to Jak and to all of our new Year 7 students. You belong here.

## Chaplain's Reflection

Sometimes, starting something new can feel a bit like stepping out of a boat. We know where we are now, but we don't know exactly what will happen next.

When Peter saw Jesus walking on the water, he took a brave step out of the boat. He trusted Jesus, even though he was stepping into something unfamiliar.

We often think about September as the month that the kids go back to school as a new beginning, especially that transition from primary school to high school, but new beginnings can be made at any time by all of us.

New beginnings can be exciting, but they can also be scary and fill us with fear. We might worry about getting things wrong, trying something we have never done before, or not knowing what lies ahead.

Peter reminds us that we do not have to have everything figured out before we take the first step. We can have courage, trust in others, and believe that we are capable of more than what we think.

As we begin this new chapter in our community, let's be willing to step out of our boats — to try new things, support one another, and have the courage to take that first step.

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

**Mark**

*Chaplain, Open Academy*

## Thank You

Thank you for your support in these first days back. We are looking forward to a wonderful year together.

*Take courage.*

With every good wish,

**Dan Bagshaw**

*Principal*