

Principal's Bulletin – 21 November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been another busy and purposeful week at Open Academy.

Our Year 11 students have completed the first week of their Pre Public Examinations, and I want to commend them for their mature and focused approach. In particular, the 2 hour 15 minute English Literature exam was a real test of writing stamina, and students rose to the challenge brilliantly. We are all very proud of the determination and effort they have shown so far, and we know this experience will stand them in good stead for the summer.

This week, we were delighted to welcome the Bishop of Thetford to the academy. As we continue to develop our identity as a Church of England school, it was a valuable opportunity to discuss our progress and next steps. The bishop was extremely positive about the direction we are taking and our commitment to creating a compassionate, aspirational and inclusive community for our young people.

Last Friday, we also had the pleasure of hosting a meeting for all Trust Headteachers, Trustees and Chairs of Governors. It was wonderful to showcase the academy, and we received encouraging feedback - particularly around the excellent conduct of our students and the smart, consistent standard of uniform across the school. These are things we can all be proud of, and I would like to thank parents and carers for your continued support in upholding our high expectations.

Thank you, as ever, for your ongoing partnership with us. I wish you all a restful weekend.

Dan Bagshaw
Principal

PE Update

There is a Year 8 rugby fixture on Wednesday, 26 November against Aylsham. Good luck to our players - Troy, Elijah, Jack, Mustafa, Taylor, Stanley, Mohammed, Charlie, Anton, Rylee, Nemo, Ollie, Sam, David and Julian.



Five year 9 students (with a cameo from Demarco W) represented the academy in the smash-up event on Tuesday, well done to Shamim, Stefan, Dymtro, Vlad and James.



A massive well done to our Year 9 netball team who played Hewett and Thorpe yesterday evening in an indoor tournament. Two very comprehensive wins. 10-0 win over Thorpe and 20-0 against Hewett Academy.

The girls showed great sportsmanship changing positions around, encouraging each other and cheering on others. This team continues to show how fantastic they are and are a real credit to the Academy. Well done girls! The player of the match was Eva.

Arbor App

There has been an issue again with food purchase transactions which may appear against the wrong day due to the synchronisation failing. The matter is being dealt with, and we apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Curriculum Enhancement Week

Please find attached the preference booklet for Curriculum Enhancement Week 2026 - one of the most exciting parts of our school year!

These fantastic opportunities are available to all **Year 7, 8 and 9 students**. Trips have now gone live on Arbor, where they appear as 'CEW – name of trip' in the Trips section.

Please remember that **places are allocated on a first come, first served basis**. Most trips still have spaces available, so we strongly encourage any students who have not yet signed up to secure their place soon. **Students only need to sign up for one trip** - this will run over the 3 days of CEW.

For paid trips, families can choose to pay in full or begin with a partial payment on Arbor. 50% of the total trip cost is due by Monday, 26 January.

The deadline for selecting your trip option is Monday, 1 December.

Any questions please get in touch with either:

Miss Luter - bobbie.luter@open-academy.org.uk

Mrs Molloy - leila.molloy@open-academy.org.uk

Midwinter Tales



Join us for an enchanting evening of storytelling under the stars! Our Midwinter Tales event will take place on Monday, 15 December, from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

Gather around the fire to listen to some traditional winter, festive, and ghost stories told by our wonderful storytellers. Winter has long been a time to huddle by the fire and share stories, bringing communities closer together. This event celebrates that tradition, offering students, as well as their families and friends, a chance to enjoy the warmth of stories.

Hot chocolate will be available, with a break to toast marshmallows over the fire. Tickets are just £2 each (available on the Arbor app). Friends & family are welcome.

All proceeds will go towards new books for the library.

Year 9

Shoutouts this week to the following:

- 9D, 9I and 9D for being phenomenal in their EA1 History assessment – Mr Pickup
- Well done to Bianca, Jess, Ameera and Megan K for excellent contribution to Year 10 and Year 11 netball games on Tuesday. All girls played exceptionally well even though they're out of age. Well done - Mrs Trail
- Elise S showing understanding of math methods with excellent working out – Mrs Marsham
- Teja M for fantastic contributions in English lessons – Miss Roberts

- I would say all my form who have been delightful all week: Dymtro, Joel, Jess, Sabine, Matthew, Phoebe, Lily, Esme, Daniel, Rose, Ellie, Megan, Amalie, Ayo, Emily, Edward and Kaylen – Mrs Lloret-Blackman
- Great work in my Year 9 rugby class for their final lesson on Rugby – Mr Lambert
- Finley L, Biance M and Johnson B for effort and attitude in science.
- Alfie H for excellent effort with using different methods to answer maths questions.
- Excellent Art assessments from both of my Year 9 classes this week. Real concentration and has been great to see such progress with their drawing skills.

Year 10

Year 10 continue to set an example for the younger years with their conduct, uniform and commitment to school. These are just some comments I have received from teachers about our fantastic Year 10s:

- David D, Talula E, Rowan G, Hollie G, Aaliyah, Callum B, Noah C, Freya S and Jessica T. Congratulations to these students showing real commitment to their studies.
- Excellent effort always in Art from the following students: Jennifer B, Isabella DP, Shanelli K, Rowan G, Hollie G, Connor P and Noah C - Mr Walters
- Shanelli, Noah, Skye and Cameron for effort in English- Miss Roberts
- Aiden M for continued effort with starter maths questions which are GCSE related - Mrs Marsham
- Lizzy and Ruby for persevering with very tricky chemistry calculations this week - Mr Stephen
- Caitlyn for a really good attitude to work and Tom V for great answers to questions - Mr S Murray

Top achievement points this week were:

Callum B, Noah C, Lucas B, Rowan G and Hollie G.

Year 11

We would like to praise our Year 11 students for their excellent effort and attitude during the first week of their PPEs. It has been great to see how maturely they have approached this important part of the year.

Across the week, students have demonstrated commitment to their preparation, and we have been especially impressed by how many have been in school early with revision cards and notes, making the most of every opportunity to review their learning. Their focus, resilience and determination have been clear to see, and staff have commented on the calm, positive atmosphere around the exams.

As we head into the weekend, we encourage students to continue their revision, so they feel confident and well prepared for the week ahead. We hope they return on Monday with the same positive attitude and strong work ethic that they have shown so far. Well done, Year 11 — keep it up! Particular shout outs from staff are:

- Evie D for lots of revision! Alfie S, Mariia, Harvey - all working super hard towards their PPE – Mrs Molloy
- Maizie, Lily and Kenzie for showing excellent effort towards their English Language exam – Mr Coyne
- Jenson L for his efforts during his PPE and smashing his college interview! – Mrs Hindry
- Mia and Erica for revising their socks off before the science mocks this week – Mr Stephen
- Martha and Esme, great attitude to get extra revision resources – Mr Murray
- Phoebe and Owen for showing good effort and resilience towards maths and all of their exams – Mr Bradshaw
- Annalee for showing such a pro-active attitude towards tutor time and utilising that time! – Mr Phillips

Chaplain's Update



Christmas Hampers 'Random Acts of Kindness'

This year we are giving out Christmas Hampers as random acts of kindness to our community again. Students are aware of this in school, but we would appreciate your support in this too. Below is an item list of goods that can be donated for the hampers so please feel free to send items into the academy with your child. Please note, it is very important that we stick to the hamper list. Perishable good vouchers can be given as well as donations. The last day for items/donations will be Tuesday, 16 December. Thank you so much in advance for your generosity.

- Perishable Food Vouchers
- Stuffing
- Shloer/Red or White
- Custard
- Savoury Snacks
- Tin Of Chocolates
- Biscuit/Shortbread Tin/
Packets
- Christmas Crackers
- Christmas Cake
- Christmas Pudding
- Mince Pies
- Cranberry Sauce
- Gravy Granules
- Crisps
- Tinned fruit/Peas/Potatoes



URCH
LAND

Open Academy Celebration of Christmas 2025-Save the Date

We want to welcome you all to our annual Celebration of Christmas Carol Service. This will be a great night of festive cheer for the whole of our community. There will of course be carols, student performances, snacks, and a wonderful Christmassy atmosphere. We would love everyone in our Open Academy community to come and to invite friends and family too.

The date is Thursday, 4 December at 6.30pm. There is no charge for this event, but please feel free to bring in an item from the "Christmas Hamper What to Bring" list attached, to donate to our Random Acts of Kindness Christmas Hampers initiative. Thanks again in advance for your generosity.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND