

## Principal's Bulletin – 13 March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

You may have seen media reports this week regarding a serious incident at another secondary school locally. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected at this difficult time. I know that events like this can understandably cause concern for families, and we have received a small number of calls from parents seeking reassurance.

I would like to reassure you that the safety of our students and staff is always our highest priority. Like all schools, we have clear safeguarding and emergency procedures in place, including a lockdown protocol designed to keep students safe should an external or internal incident occur. Staff are trained in these procedures and, importantly, we practised a full lockdown drill with students at the end of the Autumn term so that everyone understands how to respond calmly and safely if ever required. While incidents of this nature are extremely rare, schools must be prepared.

Our procedures are regularly reviewed and aligned with national guidance, and we work closely with the local authority and police where appropriate. Students would always be supervised and guided by staff should an emergency procedure ever need to be implemented.

I hope this provides some reassurance to families. As always, if parents or carers have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the academy and we will be happy to help.

Alongside this, I wanted to share something very positive happening in school. This half term we have launched our "Great Work" rewards initiative with students in Years 7 and 11, and it has already been hugely popular with students and staff alike.

The initiative recognises and celebrates high-quality academic work, effort and presentation in lessons. When students produce excellent work, teachers award a Great Work stamp, which students collect on a reward card. Once a card is completed, it is entered into a raffle with prizes such as vouchers and other rewards.

The aim is simple: to celebrate the effort students put into their learning and to reinforce the positive habits that help young people succeed. The response from students has been fantastic, with many already keen to collect stamps and take pride in the quality of their work. Because of its success so far, we are planning to extend the scheme to all year groups after the Easter break, so that every student has the opportunity to take part.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the academy. Working together with families helps us create a safe, ambitious and supportive environment where our young people can thrive.

With best wishes for the weekend

Dan Bagshaw  
Principal

## Netball - Year 7, 8 and 9



Monday, 2 March:

The Year 8 team performed brilliantly at the U13 County Cup Netball Tournament held at Gresham's School. Facing strong competition from both private and state schools in one of the toughest tournaments of the year, the girls showed excellent resilience, teamwork and determination throughout the day. They progressed into the Bowl competition and played some fantastic netball, ultimately finishing as runners-up overall. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects the team's hard work and commitment. Well done to all the students, what a fantastic achievement!

Monday, 9 March:

Following on from the Year 8 success, the Year 7 team delivered an outstanding performance at the U12 County Cup Netball Tournament held at Gresham's School. Competing against a strong field of both private and state schools in what is the most competitive tournament of the year, the girls showed fantastic determination and teamwork throughout the day. After progressing into the Plate competition — the second highest tier of the tournament — they went on to win every match and were crowned Plate Champions!!! This marks the first time Open Academy has achieved this success, making it a truly incredible accomplishment for the team. Well done to all the girls, we're so proud of you - the future is looking bright for this team!

Wednesday, 11 March:

The Year 9 netball team travelled to Framingham Earl High School to compete in the U14 Area Tournament against Hethersett, Framingham Earl and Sprowston. Having been crowned U13 champions last year, the girls were determined to retain their title this season. After a slightly shaky start against Hethersett, the team quickly found their rhythm and went on to win every remaining game, progressing confidently to the final. In a strong final performance, they defeated Hethersett 7–3 to be crowned U14 Area Champions. An excellent achievement and a fantastic display of determination, teamwork and resilience. Year 9 continues to show their amazing work ethic and are role models to our younger students. Well done girls, once again we're so proud of you!

Miss Trail  
Teacher

## Benefits of Attending School

By maximising student's attendance at school, they are more likely to benefit from:

- better social skills
- higher grades
- stronger friendships
- enhanced life skills

There are many reasons a student's attendance may be dropping, whether they are starting to miss a couple of hours a term or arriving late to lessons, it all adds up. Even being five minutes late every

day can equate to a chunk of time that is being missed in the classroom and in the long term this can impact on their grades.

Did you know that missing 17 school days in a year is 85 hours of lost learning? This could reduce student's GCSE results by an entire grade. Don't let a slipping attendance determine their future!

Attendance Team

### Parent Drop-In – Monday, 23 March (11.30-12.30)



#### Open Academy

are delighted to invite parents and carers to our upcoming Parent Drop-In!  
Come along for a friendly chat, support, and information.

**Date: Monday, 23rd March**

**Time: 11:30am - 12:30pm**

**Location: Open Academy**

#### Services Attending:

**Norfolk SENDIASS** - a statutory service providing free and impartial information, advice and support about special educational needs & disabilities (SEND). This includes topics such as SEN Support, Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Appealing to the SEND Tribunal. They offer bookable helpline appointments and library drop-ins.



**Family Hubs** - a service that offers parents and carers advice and support to help keep their children healthy, safe and thriving. Family Hubs are available for families from conception right through childhood and the teenage years, up to age 19, or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.



Parents and carers will have the opportunity to:



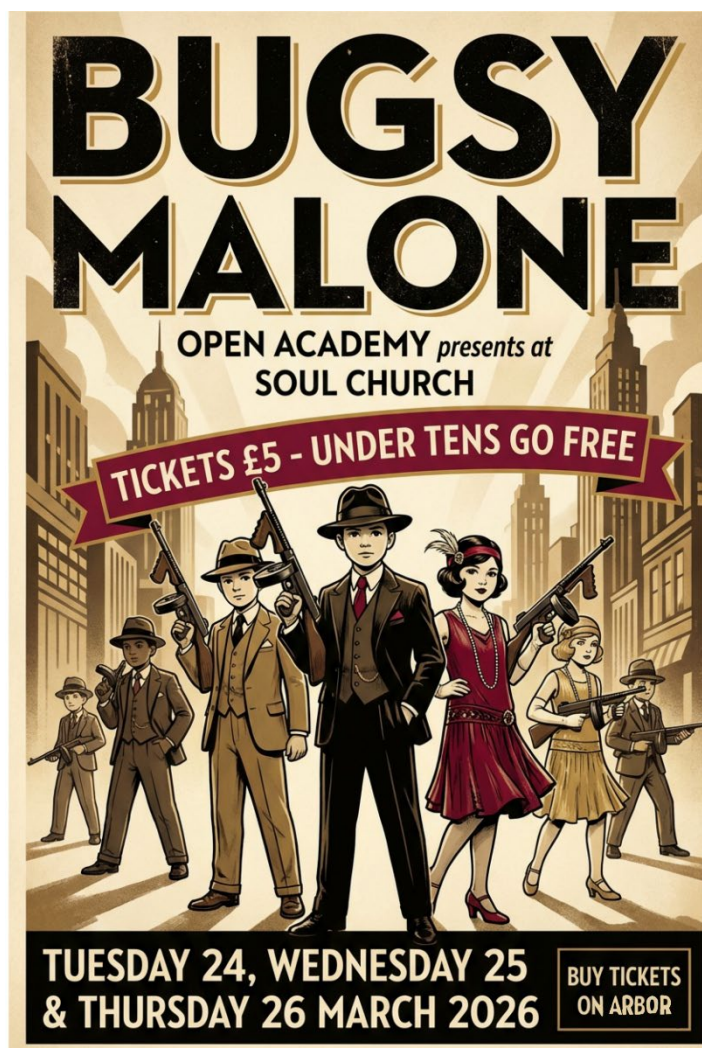
- Speak directly with professionals for information, advice, and guidance
- Collect leaflets and resources



We look forward to seeing you there!

Mrs Halliday  
Associate Assistant Principal

Drama Production – 24, 25 and 26 March



Please book your tickets via the Arbor app and join us for our production at Soul Church.

Mrs Ormosi  
Teacher

### Chaplain's Reflection

I just want to start this reflection by saying that every one of you are valued and needed in our community. There is a short story in the Gospel of Mark about a man who could not walk. His friends carried him on a mat to see Jesus, but when they arrived, the house was packed and they could not get through the door because of the crowds.

It would have been easy to give up and go home. But they did not. Instead, they climbed onto the roof, opened it up, tile by tile and carefully lowered their friend down into the room in front of Jesus. The Bible says that the man was healed.

Our worlds can feel like crowded places too—busy, pressured, and full of challenges. But every day in our communities, something similar happens. You notice the people who are struggling. You carry some of their worries, encourage them when they feel stuck, and keep trying when a breakthrough does not come easily.

Many people move forward not because everything was easy, but because someone like you believed they were worth the effort.

So, as we reflect today, remember this: for some people, you may be one of the friends carrying the mat. That quiet, determined and encouraging support can make a bigger difference than you may ever see. In fact, it is almost miraculous.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers.

God bless.

Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND