THE NEWSLETTER OF OPEN ACADEMY

Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust

The Open Way

COURAGE IN EVERY STEP, FAITH IN EVERY JOURNEY

"Take courage"
MATTHEW 14:27

FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER 2026

Perseverance: Keep Going, Every Day

Dear Families

This week, our whole school has been thinking about perseverance. It is one of our three core values, alongside Aspiration and Respect. Perseverance means keeping going when things get hard. It means not giving up, even when the finish line feels a long way off.

In his reflection at the end of this bulletin, our Chaplain, Mr Pimlott, shares the words of Hebrews 12:1: "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Every one of our young people has their own race to run. Our job, together, is to help them keep running.

It is the same message at the heart of our school vision. When Peter stepped out of the boat to walk towards Jesus (Matthew 14:22–33), he only began to sink when he took his eyes off the path ahead. Jesus said, "Take courage." Great things happen one brave step at a time.

Every Day Counts: Perseverance and Attendance

The simplest and most powerful way to persevere at school is to **be here: every day, on time, ready to learn.**

Some days are harder than others. A child may feel tired, worried or just not in the mood. Those are the days when coming to school matters most. Each small act of perseverance builds the habit that leads to success.

What last year's Year 11 showed us

We looked closely at the GCSE results of last year's Year 11 and how often each student was in school. The link could not be clearer.

3 in 4

students with 90% or higher attendance achieved grade 4 or above in both English and maths

1 in 4

students with attendance below 90% achieved the same

Students who attended 90% or more of the time achieved excellent results. 75.6% of them gained a grade 4 or above in both English and maths, outperforming the national average. 44.4% also gained a strong pass (grade 5 or above) in both subjects, in line with the national figure.

Good attendance also helped to close gaps. Students with special educational needs who were in school regularly achieved results close to those of their classmates.

The difference was not about who was "the cleverest". It was about *who was here*. Students who came to school every day gave themselves the chance to learn, to ask for help, to catch up and to show what they could really do.

What does 90% really mean?

90% sounds high, but it is not. A student with 90% attendance misses:

- **half a day** of school every week
- **around 19 days** (almost four weeks) every school year
- **half a school year** across Years 7 to 11

That is a lot of learning to miss, and it is very hard to catch up.

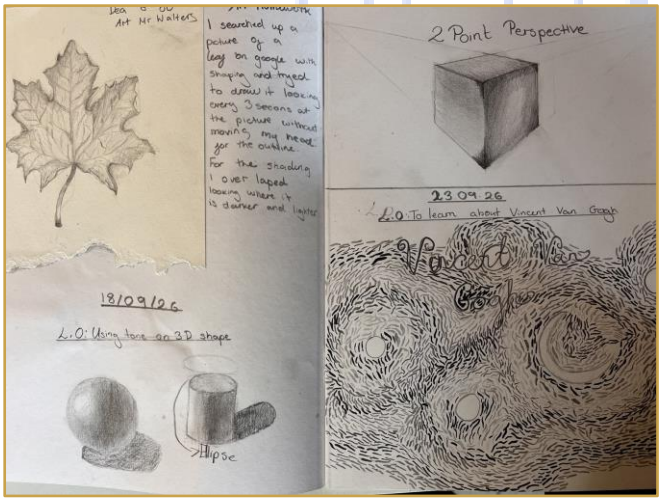
How you can help

- Make sure your child comes to school every day and arrives on time.
- Book medical and dental appointments after school or in the holidays wherever you can.
- Keep family holidays to the school holidays.
- If your child is ill, please call us on the first morning of absence on 01603 481640.
- If your child is anxious about coming in, or something is making attendance hard, talk to us early. Your child's tutor, Head of Year and our Attendance team are here to help.

We know life can be busy, and some families face real challenges. We will always work with you. Please don't wait until a small worry becomes a big one.

Celebrating Success

Year 8 Art: Dea G



Mr Walters has shared this amazing work from Dea's sketchbook. It shows real skill, and a great deal of perseverance. In just a few weeks, Dea has used tone and shading to make simple shapes look 3D. She has studied the artist Vincent van Gogh, building up his famous swirling skies from hundreds of tiny marks to draw a detailed autumn leaf for homework, looking closely at where it is darker and lighter

Every one of those tiny marks is an act of patience. Well done, Dea!

Year 10 Praise

Mr Lambert, Head of Year 10, would like to celebrate:

- **Ayo**, for excellent verbal contributions in all English lessons
- **Tilly, Lily, Jasmine and Hattie**, for consistent effort
- **Theo L**, for attending lessons independently, and for a great drama performance, even though the fire drill interrupted it!
- **Ashanti G, Harvey B, David E, Alfie Q, Lincoln, Jess S, Ella-Mai P and Indy S**, for an excellent start in Science

Consistent effort is perseverance in action. We are proud of you all.

Dates for Your Diary

Parent and Carer Coffee Morning



We are excited to invite you to our first Parent and Carer Coffee Morning of the year, hosted by Mrs Halliday, our SENDCo.

Come along for a friendly chat with members of our Pastoral and SEND teams, and meet the visiting support services:

- SENDIASS
- School and Community Team
- Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Family Hub

All parents and carers are welcome.

Thursday 5 November 2026

8.30am – 10.00am

Open Ark, Open Academy

Let us know you are coming. Register here: **Coffee Morning sign-up form**, or scan the QR code.

Chaplain's Reflection

In the academy this week, the core value we have focused on has been perseverance. The Bible reminds us in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 1, with these words: **"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."**

We all have our own race to run. Sometimes in life other people may appear to move faster than us, but life is not about comparing ourselves with others, and we must remember, even when the road feels long, every step forward matters.

When we see athletes taking part in the Olympics and Commonwealth Games, they rarely look back or focus on what is going on around them. If they do, it's just a fleeting glimpse. Any more than that, and they start to drift out of their lane or clip a hurdle. They run their own races.

The race of life can be a struggle sometimes, but success is not always about how quickly you reach the finish line, but about having the courage and determination to keep going when life gets tough. Never give up, because your greatest strength is often discovered through your greatest and biggest challenges.

If it's tough at the moment, keep going. You are a winner and you will win.

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

Mark Pimlott, Chaplain

And Finally…

Thank you, as always, for your support. Every morning that your child walks through our doors is a step forward in their race, and we are proud to run alongside them.

Have a lovely weekend.

Dan Bagshaw
Principal

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND