

The *Open* Way

COURAGE IN EVERY STEP, FAITH IN EVERY JOURNEY

"Take courage"

MATTHEW 14:27

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER 2026

Dear Families

This week our students have been thinking about **contentment and gratitude**. We also have an exciting chance for parents to get more involved in school life, as we are looking for **two new parent governors**. And, as always, there is lots of student success to celebrate!

Our Value This Week: Perseverance

Learning to be content

Our school value this week has been **Perseverance**. In worship and tutor time, students have explored contentment and gratitude. This means finding reasons to be thankful, even when life feels hard.

"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances... I have learned the secret of being content."

Philippians 4:11-12

St Paul wrote these words from prison. He did not say that contentment came easily. He said he had **learned** it. Contentment is learned, not given. That is why it sits so well with Perseverance. Like any skill, it gets stronger with practice.

Avoiding the comparison trap

Young people see a lot of other people's lives online. It is easy to think that everyone else has more, looks better or is having more fun. We call this the comparison trap. We have encouraged students to notice when they start comparing, and to turn their thoughts to what they are thankful for instead.

Try this at home

A few simple questions at the tea table can help gratitude to grow:

- › What are three good things that happened today?
- › Who or what are you thankful for this week?
- › Was there a hard moment today? What helped you get through it?

Become a Parent Governor

We have **two vacancies for parent governors** on our Local Governing Body. This is a great chance to make a real difference at Open Academy, and to make sure the voice of parents is heard where decisions are made.

What do governors do?

Governors work alongside me and the senior team to help the school be the best it can be. They meet regularly to look at how the school is doing. They ask good questions, offer support and check that we are doing what we say we will do. As a Church of England school, our governors also help to make sure our Christian ethos runs through everything we do.

Why the parent voice matters

Parent governors bring something special to the table. You know what school life looks like from home. You hear what other families are saying, at the school gate and in the group chat. At governor meetings, you can **share those views and represent parents**, helping us to see things through the eyes of families.

This helps us make better decisions about the things that matter most to families, such as learning, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and how we keep in touch with home.

What's in it for you?

Being a governor is rewarding. You will learn how a school really works, build skills that can help in your own job, and meet people who care deeply about our community. Most of all, you will know that you have helped to shape a better school for your child and for every child here.

Do I need any experience?

No. You do not need to be an expert in education. What matters is that you care about Open Academy, listen well and are happy to ask questions. Training and support are available for new governors.

Parent Governor Vacancies at a Glance

Places available: 2 parent governors

Who can apply: parents and carers of students at Open Academy

How to apply: send a short expression of interest to principal@open-academy.org.uk

Questions? Email the same address. I would be very happy to have a chat.

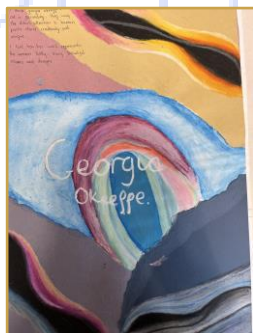
Celebrating Our Students

Amazing artwork in Years 10 and 11

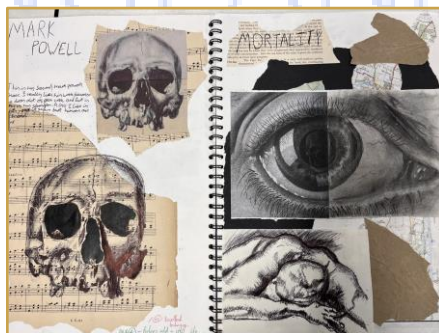
A huge well done to **Tilly** and **Jasmine** in Year 10, and **Connor P** and **Elizabeth H** in Year 11, for some truly excellent artwork. Mr Walters shared these pieces with me this week and I was blown away. Each page is a study of a real artist. Look at the detail, the careful shading and the bold use of ink, pen and pastel. This is Perseverance in action!



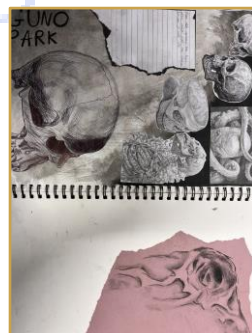
Inspired by Karl Blossfeldt



Inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe



Inspired by Mark Powell



Inspired by Guno Park

A golden weekend for Jak



Congratulations to **Jak**, who had an incredible weekend of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ).

On Saturday, Jak competed at Grappling Industries in London. On Sunday, he competed at All Stars BJJ here in Norwich. Across the weekend he entered seven categories and won **seven gold medals and two belts**. That is gold in every single category!

Results like this come from hours of training and lots of determination. Thank you to Jak's family for sharing the news with us. We are very proud of you, Jak!

Cooking up a storm in Food



Our Food students have been busy in the kitchen! Well done to **Year 7** for making delicious fruit salads, full of colour and goodness.

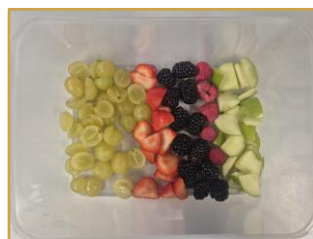
Students have also been cooking teriyaki noodles and golden vegetable rice with chicken. All of the dishes looked excellent, and I hope families enjoyed tasting them at home. Thank you to Miss Luter!.

Coming Up Next in Food

Year 7: Pasta Salad

Year 8: Dutch Apple Cakes

Year 9: Cajun Chicken Pasta



Year 7 fruit salads



Golden rice with chicken

Chaplain's Reflection

I was out in my car a couple of weeks ago and was away with my thoughts. I was thinking about the extra bills we were having to pay that month and other things that were wrong too. I then began comparing myself with others and what they owned. "I wish I had that, or could afford to buy what they had" was my train of thought. Before long I could feel myself getting down over this, and it didn't feel good. I had fallen into the comparison pit.

In those next moments of "come on Mark, pull yourself together", I tried to focus on what I do have, rather than what I don't. It was not easy to do, but as I began to practise it, it was the ladder out of the pit of comparison, to a walk of thankfulness.

I want to encourage you with this. We all journey through hardships differently. Thankfulness doesn't necessarily change our circumstances, but it changes who we are within them. Sometimes the difference between frustration and thankfulness is simply where we choose to look.

In closing, I will share our key verse from the Bible in the academy this week. It says this: "I have learned to be content, whatever the circumstances" (Philippians 4:11).

Let's look in the right places, and be thankful and content for what we have. Life is so much different when we do.

Mark Pimlott, Chaplain

Thank you, as always, for your support. Have a lovely weekend.

Dan Bagshaw Principal