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 6 NOVEMBER 2026

Welcome Back

Dear Families

Welcome back after half term. I hope you all had a restful break. The school has been busy from the very first morning, and it has been lovely to see our young people back with us, settled and ready to learn.

Our theme this week: Respect

Respect is one of our three core values, alongside Aspiration and Perseverance. This week we have been thinking about what respect looks like in a community where everyone is different.

In 1 Corinthians 12, St Paul says the church is like a body. A body has hands, feet, eyes and ears. Each part is different, and each part is needed. He writes: **"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it"** (1 Corinthians 12:27).

Our school is just like that. Our students come from many different backgrounds. They have different gifts and different strengths. Some are artists, some are athletes, some are great listeners and some are brilliant at making others laugh. We do not need to be the same to belong. Respect means valuing each other's gifts, and working together for a shared purpose.

Different strengths. Shared purpose. United identity.

One body, many parts – 1 Corinthians 12

Year 11: Straight into PPEs

Our Year 11 students have come back from half term and gone straight into their first round of **Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs)**. These are practice exams. They help students get used to the exam hall, manage their time and find out what they need to work on before the real GCSEs next summer.

The revision kits



Before the break, every Year 11 student was given their own revision kit. You can see some of them in the photo, laid out ready to go. Each kit includes revision guides and workbooks, plus a pack of record cards for making flash cards. Students have been using these to prepare, and we have been really pleased with how seriously many of them have taken it.

How you can help at home

- Ask your child which exams they have this week, and how they went.
- Help them find a quiet space to revise, away from phones and screens.
- Encourage them to turn their notes into flash cards, and test them on a few.
- Make sure they get a good night's sleep and a proper breakfast on exam days.
- Remind them that mocks are for learning. Mistakes now are what help them improve.

Thank you for your support. A calm, steady routine at home makes a real difference.

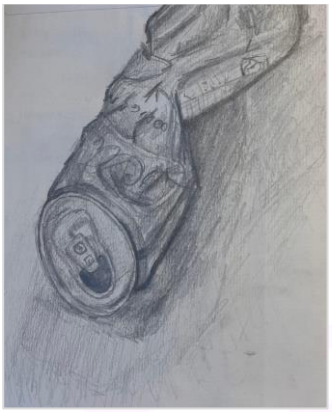
Remembrance Service at St Francis Church

Next week we will come together to mark Remembrance Day. Our service will take place at St Francis Church on Wednesday 11 November. It will be streamed live back into school, so that our whole community can join together and keep the two minutes' silence as one. The service will include a welcome and opening prayer led by Rev Julian before our student ambassadors will read from John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." They will also read the poem "Taking a Stand".

Remembrance is a powerful lesson in respect. We honour those who gave so much, and we pray for peace in our world today. You may like to talk with your child at home about what Remembrance means to your family.

Year 9 Art: Drawing from Life

We are very proud of the work coming out of Year 9 Art. Mr Walters has shared some recent assessment pieces. Students were asked to draw a crushed drink can from life, looking carefully at light, shadow, dents and reflections.



Well done to Delilah, Irmantas, Talulluh and Barbara, whose drawings are shown here. Their teacher's comments say it all: "outstanding work", "superb effort", "amazing" and "beautiful work and technique". One student also linked their drawing to the Pop Art of Andy Warhol. Every piece shows a different style – another lovely reminder that our gifts are all different.

SEND Support for Families



Thank you for coming to our coffee morning

A big thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us for our SEND coffee morning in school on Thursday. It was lovely to see so many of you. These mornings are a chance to meet staff, ask questions and talk with other families who understand. We will be holding more, so please look out for future dates.

SENsational Families from Nansa

Nansa (the Norfolk and Norwich SEND Association) runs a free service called SENsational Families. Their Family Support Advisors offer advice, guidance and advocacy to families of children and young people (from birth to 24) with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Your child does not need a diagnosis – support is there if SEND is suspected too.

They run regular support groups and drop-in sessions, including a Norwich Group on alternate Mondays in term time. They also offer workshops on things like filling in DLA forms and managing behaviour, plus holiday activities.

Find out more about SENsational Families

Website: www.nansa.org.uk | **Phone:** 01603 414109 | **Social media:** @nansanorfolk

Nansa is an independent charity. If you have any questions about your child's needs in school, please contact our SEND team through the school office.

A Gentle Reminder: Disabled Parking

We have disabled parking bays at the front of the academy. These spaces are for people who genuinely need them, such as visitors, parents, carers and students with a disability or mobility needs.

Please do not use these bays as a drop-off or pick-up point, even for a minute. When they are blocked, the people who rely on them may have nowhere safe to park. Thank you for your help and your respect for others – it makes a real difference to members of our community.

Chaplain's Reflection

In 1 Corinthians 12, the Bible reminds us that we are all part of one body, with each part having a different purpose. Just as our hands, feet, eyes and ears each play a unique role, we all have different strengths, talents and gifts. Every person matters, and everyone has something valuable to offer.

Life is a little like a packet of Fruit Pastilles! Imagine if every sweet was exactly the same colour and flavour. We would miss out on the variety that makes them so special. Each sweet is different, yet together they make one packet full of colour, choice and enjoyment.

Who we are is much the same. We come from different backgrounds, have different abilities and see the world in different ways. Some of us are great listeners, others are problem-solvers, encouragers or people who bring laughter into a room. It is these differences that make our community special.

As a community, we believe that God made each of us unique for a reason. We do not have to be the same to belong. Every one of us has value, purpose and a part to play.

As we begin this new half term, I want to offer this encouragement to you. Never underestimate the difference you make through who you are and what you do. Whether you are supporting your family, encouraging someone else, or simply getting through a challenging day, your contribution matters. You are not here by accident, and you are valued as part of our community. Together, we make up our very own special packet of Fruit Pastilles!

I hope you and your families have a happy and settled start to the half term. You will be in my thoughts and prayers.

You are valued. You are loved. You belong.

God bless, Mark Pimlott, Chaplain

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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

Dan Bagshaw
Principal