

Open Academy Update 5 February 2021
For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child!

Dear Parent/Carer/Student

Welcome to the newsletter this week.

As we race towards the half term break, I can only echo the Prime Minister's praise of parents and what you have been doing by managing your lives and your home schooling during this lockdown. Great work everyone – thank you!

I hope the DARES (Directed Activities Related to Everyday Situations) campaign has been going down well with the students and has given them some screen respite and introduced some fun and activity in to their learning. If you are unsure about the program, please do get your child to share with you this week's assembly that explains all.

It has been Young Person's Mental Health Week which has been reflected in some of our lessons and activities. This week, the Local Authority have also be focussing on children's wellbeing across Norfolk. Why not try out this daily activity challenge from @norfolkcc to help them feel better and look after their wellbeing.

Their activity guide is attached to this newsletter or can be accessed here <http://nccfas.co/Gf2Tu> or searching for the following tag. [#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek](https://twitter.com/norfolkcc)

I will keep things brief this week so that you can focus on all the great information in the newsletter. I will just thank the students for attending our first virtual School Council (Open Voice) Meeting this morning. As a result, we will be sending out wellbeing questionnaires to students mid-week next week where, amongst other things, we will be deciding which charities we will be supporting for the rest of this academic year.

Finally, this week though, I will just note that we do not have the same resilience built in to running the Academy. We run the OAKC childcare with the smallest rota we can, often with staff who travel a distance to get in. If the snow hits as predicted over the weekend, it is likely we will make the call early to not open the building at all. In part, this is to ensure that we do not add to the NHS strain by risking accidents as people make their way in, either by car or on foot. We will endeavour to let those families who rely on our Childcare know on Monday morning, but I thought I should flag this up now so that you are forewarned.

Kindest regards

Jon Ford
Principal

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1. Extreme Weather Forecast

With the forecast for snow this weekend and into Monday, we will be monitoring the weather forecast carefully and may have to invoke our extreme weather plan on Monday. We will do our utmost to try to remain open, however, with the current reduced staffing levels and travel routes of those staff due to attend, it may not be safe to do so, especially if we are unable to make the site safe.

Should a decision be made to close the Academy building, we will do the following by **7.30am**:

- Put a message on the Academy website
- Send a text home to parents of students due to be attending the Academy
- Add the closure on Norfolk County Council School Closures page

<http://www.schoolclosures.norfolk.gov.uk/>

PLEASE NOTE: Virtual learning and live lessons will continue as normal.

Mrs Appleby

2. Action for Happiness

Please find attached an Action for Happiness calendar for February that you may find helpful.

Mrs Hewitt-Coleman

3. Upcoming Webinars

Please find below links to upcoming webinars that may be of interest:

Online Safety: [Parents Information Event \(Online Safety\) Tickets, Thu 11 Feb 2021 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Half-term Fun: [Parents Webinar \(Half term fun\) Tickets, Thu 18 Feb 2021 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Nurturing Resilience: [Parents Webinar \(Nurturing Resilience\) Tickets, Thu 25 Feb 2021 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Mrs Chapman

4. Key Stage 4 Options Booklet

We are pleased to present you with the options booklet. It is a week early. A printed copy will be available in reception from Wednesday. It could be collected on the daily exercise walk if you wish. The options assembly is being prepared and will be available next week in the bulletin. The booklet and assembly work together to give the full picture so I anticipate that almost all questions will be answered by then. The process is designed to take a long time to give students plenty of reflection time. It is not first come first served. Students will be allocated classes based upon their preferences and their hard work in each subject. The rules by which we are bound by the government regarding GCSE curriculum will be fully explained in the assembly.

Mr Ward

5. Year 7 News

Hello Year 7 and welcome to the penultimate newsletter before half term. First off, a big thank you to parents/carers for the continued support. We appreciate how difficult it can be having students at home. We are impressed with how the students have engaged and the quality of the work being produced.

Only one week to go for a well-deserved rest and break for yourselves and your parents. You have all worked so hard and we are very proud of all you have achieved so far. Please keep sending pictures of

challenges, DARES and any projects you have going on at home. Mrs Lamb and myself miss you all and would love to know what you are doing at home to keep yourselves busy. We will be providing details of what we have been doing next week.

There is a full Student Council meeting in progress with Mr Ford and your head boy/head girl will share the information from this with you.

A questionnaire should be available very soon to check on how you are feeling around lesson, school, work etc.

This week is Child Mental Health Week so we have put a feel-good calendar with this newsletter. However, please contact Mrs Lamb or Mrs Hewitt-Coleman if you are struggling and need emotional support. We are still here for you.

We have lots of Shout Outs which is amazing – WELL DONE YEAR 7!!

Mrs Taylor, English. These students have worked extremely hard this week:

Warren Middleton (did some amazing work this week), Louie King, Viktoria Kenanova, Harley Ringer, Grace Sawicki.

Miss Roberts, English

Rebecca Shapcott for reading 104 books and passing every single quiz on each one! Record breaking!
Amy Toms for reading and quizzing 16 books since the start of the school year.

Mrs Clayton, English

Roman Taylor for his Macbeth Video - well done for the hard work that you put into it.

Mr Bradshaw, Maths

Roman Taylor, Madalyn Pirie, Ella-Rose Key - all for brilliant efforts and excellent work completed each lesson.

Miss Ling

Engagement in reading lessons, Luke Jones and Warren Middleton.

Mr Dilley, Drama/RS

Harrison, Emilia, Hallie, Lily-Anna - they have been great in recent Drama and RS sessions! In particular, Hallie, who was the only one who volunteered to do some online hot seating as a character answering questions - and did a brilliant character who reflected on the character work we had done and improvised spontaneously so effectively!

Mr Dilley, Geography

7E Geog

Viktoria and Madalyn - absolutely excellent participation – clear, well-expressed views and constant effort!

7O Geog

Steven Ellis, Areen, George, Lily-Mae, Jayden and Ella-Rose are being consistently awesome in Geography both in terms of work completed and contribution in live lessons!

Joshua and Keeley in 7H supporting each other and others in the live chat during a live session - really proud of them for doing that - being very supportive and doing their own work!

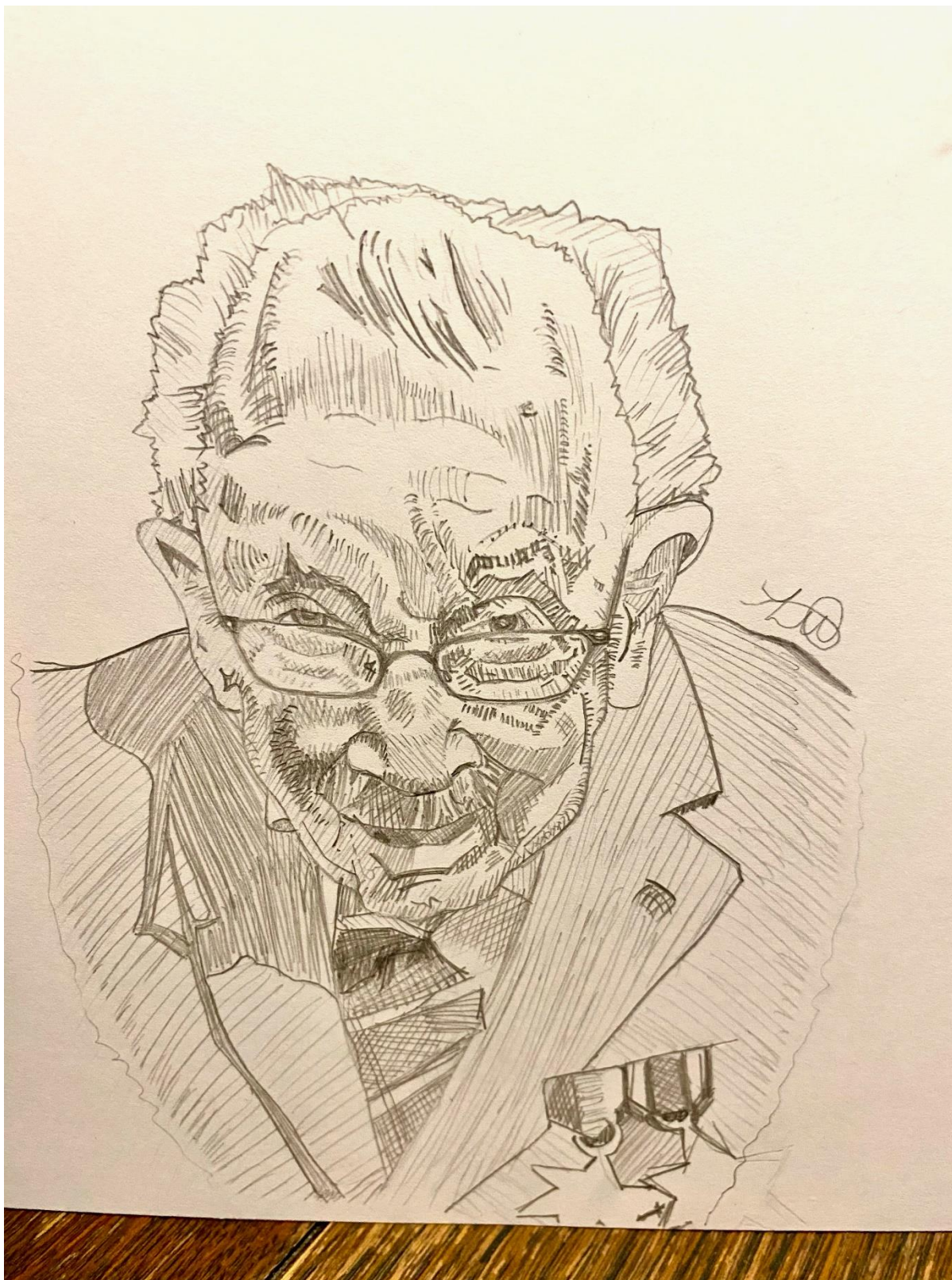
Please send us anything you are proud of doing Year7 and we will try to include it in the newsletter. It doesn't need to be school work, as you can see below.

A reminder of the contact details for the Year team:

sally-ann.hewitt@open-academy.org.uk – Head of Year 7

debbie.lamb@open-academy.org.uk Assistant Head of Year 7

Last, but not least, is a picture from Zachary Craske to commemorate Sir Tom Moore.



Mrs Hewitt- Coleman - Head of Year 7
Mrs Lamb – Assistant Head of Year 7

6. Year 8 News

The end of the first spring half term is nearly upon us! What a magnificent effort Year 8 has put in, both in terms of attendance and engagement – keep pushing upwards for one more week!

We would like to congratulate the following students for their examples of excellence this week:

Harisan Martin, Lily Turner and Lucy Edmondson for their enthusiastic engagement in reading, from Miss Ling.

Gemma Smith, Xylia Sparkes and Lily Turner for amazing contributions in History, from Mr Dilley.

Jamie Stanton, Leo Williams, Sienna Brown, Xylia Sparkes and Grace Edwards for thoughtful insights into Drama, from Mr Dilley.

Aridona Potera for excellent, consistent work in Maths from Mr Fisher, and Keisha Smith and Lily Turner, again for their work in Maths from Mr Phillips.

Emily-Jayne Copsey and Jessica Brighton for their speedy contributions in Music and to Ella Ramm and Lilly Barker for their engagement, from Miss Lines.

We have noticed that a number of students are solely relying on the calendar in Teams to notify them of live sessions and other appointments. Please could you ensure that students have Teams **AND** their emails open so that they don't miss any opportunities or lessons – this also means teachers have another form of communication with which to contact students.

Just another reminder that our Year 8 Handwriting Competition is closing this Thursday – thank you to those students who have already made their submissions and we look forward to receiving a few more in order to make the competition even more fierce!

Finally, thank you to those students who are coming along to the Game On Sessions on Monday afternoons! Whilst we fully appreciate the need to get away from computer screens, we are still welcoming everyone who would like to play a few games, socialise and shake loose from the day's lessons – invitations are sent out on the day if you would like to join in!

Wishing you a wonderful week ahead.

Miss Lines - Head of Year 8

Mrs Smith - Assistant Head of Year 8

7. Year 9 News

Just one more week until half term and another great week with high effort and attendance by Year 9 students. You may be aware that there is a high chance of snow on Sunday. Hopefully, you will all have the opportunity to get out and play and enjoy it (socially distanced of course). Please send in some of your pictures of your snowmen/women. I am doing a competition for the best one (prize yet to be decided).

Please remind all Year 9 students to make sure they sign the register when they receive the email asking them to do so every day.

For a bit of fun, on Monday at 3pm, I will be doing a scavenger hunt with all Year 9 students. If they want to take part, as well as their families, a meeting has been scheduled on Teams.

Teachers should now have access to the achievement system from home and will award achievement points from now onwards.

Shout Outs:

From Ms Roberts to Dalia Rosca for reading 44 books since the beginning of the school year and passing every quiz. Nathan Freeman for reading 11 books since the start of the school year and passing every quiz. James Hoye, 10 books read and passing 10 quizzes. Joshua Tidd, 16 books read and quizzes passed since the beginning of the school year.

From Ms Thurtell to Georgina Barnes for being caring and helping a student to learn.

From Mr Bradshaw for excellent work in maths - Lauren Aldous and Zac Skells

Mr Lambert, Head of Year 9
Mrs Roe, Assistant Head of Year 9

8. Sixth Form News

Hello everyone. A lengthy, but important newsletter this week!

UCAS

Lots of decisions and offers have started to come in for our current Year 13's – please keep checking your tracking on the UCAS website.

This week, I attended the annual Teachers UCAS Conference. It was strongly suggested that students in Year 12 start to get planning for their personal statements. Please don't worry if you don't fully understand the UCAS process or how you apply for University, there is plenty of time and we will walk you through the whole process. However, it would be really good if you started giving some thoughts to what courses you might like to do at University. Once you have an idea of what you might like to study, you can start gathering evidence for your personal statements. You need to start watching TED talks and YouTube lectures and videos on your subject of choice, start looking out for virtual work experiences in the field that you are interested in, look out for information about virtual summer schools and virtual courses and conferences that you can join. Basically, the more evidence you gather, the better and richer your personal statement is going to be once we start writing them. Make sure that you keep a log of everything you have done so you don't forget it!

I have attached a super useful pdf that will talk you through what things you could do to start getting ready for your personal statement. **PLEASE take time to read this!**

I also was lucky enough to be in a conference with Gary Neville who had some really inspirational words for students currently in sixth form. I have attached a taster clip and will post the full talk next week.

National Apprenticeship Week

Next week is Apprenticeship Week – I really strongly urge those of you who haven't applied to UCAS (and even those who have!) to join as many NEACO sessions as you can so that you can get more of an idea of how your next steps are going to work. I have attached the flyer so you can click on the links to register for each session.



National Apprenticeship Week 2021
8th – 12th February 2021
Schedule of Events and Activities

Welcome to our final schedule of events for NAW2021. Here you will find information on the events and activities we will be delivering during the week.

5 Apprenticeship Videos

Day	Video Title	Description
Monday	NAW2021 begins! What can you expect this week?	Our NAW2021 videos will be shared each morning on our Take Your Place Social Media (Twitter, IG). You can also watch them on our YouTube Channel .
Tuesday	Apprenticeship Myth Busting!	
Wednesday	Weighing up an apprenticeship	
Thursday	Apprenticeship research checklist	
Friday	A guide for parents and carers	

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!








Drop in sessions

Day	Time	Action
Monday	12:00-12:45	Click here to pre-register or join!
Tuesday	12:00-12:45	Click here to pre-register or join!
Wednesday	12:00-12:45	Click here to pre-register or join!
Friday	12:00-12:45	Click here to pre-register or join!

Our NAW2021 drop-in sessions will give your students an opportunity to check in with our Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Champion and ask any specific questions they have surrounding apprenticeships.

Any Questions? Contact your Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Champion [here!](#)

Logos: NEACO, University of Suffolk, University of Cambridge, aru, NAW2021, and various partner logos.

Live Speaker Events - 3pm to 4pm Monday 8 th February - Friday 12 th February			
		Hosted by 	 TAKE YOUR PLACE
Monday 3-4pm	Introducing the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship! Amy Stanton and Daniela Lord at Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies	You'll hear from Recruitment Advisors with Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies as they introduce the apprenticeship route into policing. They'll be covering: - What is the new PC Degree Apprenticeship? - An overview of the PCDA recruitment process. - The types of skills and competencies they are looking for. You'll also get the opportunity to meet a current Police Constable and ask them any questions you have about the role!	Click to register or scan QR code 
Tuesday 3-4pm	What do you need to know about apprenticeships? Federica Bocchetti-Dunn - School Engagement Coordinator with ASK	In this session you will get a master class on what you need to know about apprenticeships. This will cover: - What are apprenticeships and how do they work? - How do you find an apprenticeship and what opportunities will you see locally? - Signposting to useful resources - How has Covid-19 affected apprenticeships?	Click to register or scan QR code 
Wednesday 3-4pm	Meet our Alumni Apprentices! HADA Champion Rio, and Apprentices who are alumni from Neaco Schools	We will be interviewing current apprentices who are alumni from our local Neaco schools. We will be asking our brilliant alumni questions to find out about their experience as an apprentice. For example: - How did you find your experience of the recruitment process? - What is day to day life like as an apprentice? - What would be your advice to aspiring apprentices? There will also be an opportunity for you to ask your own questions to the alumni.	Click to register or scan QR code 
Thursday 3-4pm	Apprenticeships with Balfour Beatty Nicky Peine - Liaison Manager at Balfour Beatty	This will be a great opportunity for you to hear all about the apprenticeships on offer at Balfour Beatty, a multinational infrastructure group. This will include: - An introduction to Balfour Beatty and the projects they are involved with. - What it is like to be an apprentice with Balfour Beatty - Apprenticeship levels and the types of apprenticeships that are on offer.	Click to register or scan QR code 
Friday 3-4pm	Higher and Degree Apprenticeships with the University of Suffolk Joanne Taylor - Head of Apprenticeships at the University of Suffolk	As the University of Suffolk prepares to celebrate the achievements of their Higher and Degree Apprenticeship students in the forthcoming National Apprenticeship Week, Joanne will be sharing the career and academic progression opportunities available with an apprenticeship and some hints and tips on how to ensure your job application stands out to potential employers.	Click to register or scan QR code 

Please also see below information received from Young Professionals about Apprenticeship Week:

'Apprentice Talk Sessions' event coming up on Monday 8 February!

Event Details:

- Monday 8th February, 3pm - 5pm
- 12 Different Apprentice highlight journeys
- Open to all Year groups in Y10, Y11, Y12 & Y13
- Opportunity to ask questions and find out about other young people's career journeys
- Learn about different types of apprenticeships, some myth busting and a few prizes along the way!
- Free event for all students, teachers and parents

Registration Link:

<https://www.research.net/r/NAW2021>

National Apprenticeship Week Survey

Question Title * 14. Young Professionals will collect, and process, your application and diversity data. The diversity data will not form any part of the shortlisting process and you are not required to complete this information in order to submit an application.

www.research.net

ThursDARES

Matt Mixer – Matt has impressed me beyond belief by building his own home gym! He made this squat rack out of some recycled pallets and some screws. Unbelievable!



Last week, Reuben also tried something new – meditation! When carrying it out, he sat with loose clothes on his bedroom floor. He opened the curtains and windows wide and listened to the sound of birds and the gentle wind. He said that he closed his eyes, relaxed his shoulders and breathed slowly. A perfect way to de-stress. How awesome Reuben!

What amazing things did you do this week? Please email me with pics!

Shout outs

Biology - Anya – excellent poster in Biology

Art - Mia – working really well in Art

English - Amazing work in English Literature by Reuben Harvey, Cissie Waters, Abbie Summers, Cerys Ash

Business - Zak Riches for his superb work ethic

Fun Friday

New feature for my newsletters. HOW MUCH BETTER CAN THIS NEWSLETTER GET I hear you ask?

The sky is the limit! 😊

This week – Guess the TV Show from the emojis. Answers revealed next week!

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9. Student Finance

Information current as of February 2021

If you have a student in sixth form who is considering university, you and they may be exploring student finance. Students in Y13 can apply for student finance from usually around the end of February, ready for their course in September.

Student finance can be split into 2 parts – tuition fees and maintenance loans. Your young person can apply for student finance to help with both.

There are tuition fees which are set by universities, which is currently up to £9250 a year. But, UK students can apply for a tuition fee loan which will cover the whole cost of this.

Students can also apply for a maintenance loan to help pay for expenses such as accommodation. This varies in amounts depending if your young person is living at home, or studying in London. The 2021/22 maximum amount for a student living in London is up to £12,382 (government student finance website). Part of the living cost loan is means tested, so the amount your young person receives depends on household income.

These loans are often described as a 'graduate tax' in that once your young person has graduated from university, they only pay back when they are earning over a certain amount a year (currently £26,575 a year), which comes straight out of their monthly salary. If they stop earning over the amount, their payments stop at the same time. Using our current figures, your young person would pay back 9% of any money they earn over £26,575. It's also worth knowing that student loans do not affect your young person's credit score. After 30 years, any remaining balance is cancelled. You and your young person can find out more information at <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

If your young person is in Y13, they should look out for student finance opening. There will also be a deadline for applications for money to be guaranteed to be paid at the start of your young person's course, (this is usually in May) so it is worth applying before that deadline – the application can be amended if needed. It is possible to apply after May too.

If you would like to know more, there are lots of guides and information online, and student finance England has a helpline you can call. There is also help available through school and I am contactable via Ms Davies if I can help at all.

Lucy Reynolds-McKay
Higher Education Champion, neaco

10. SRB News

Massive congratulations to Freya Graysmark (SRB9) who is a runner-up in a writing competition organised by Sussex Writes (<https://www.sussexwrites.org/>)

[Home - SussexWrites](#)

We are a transformative student-led creative writing programme. Our mission is to help young people across Sussex to be creative and to inspire passionate writing. Find out more about us www.sussexwrites.org

Competitors had to write a 500 word story using the prompt 'Behind The Mask'. Freya's bleak entry drew on the work that Year 9 have been doing, studying Gothic novels. Freya's work will be published in a book later in the year but you can have exclusive access here

Behind the Mask by Freya Graysmark

I remember. It was a normal day. Well, it was my birthday. We were about to blow out the candles, but I didn't know what to wish for. I then thought back to school. I'm not popular, I don't look like them. So, I wished to look normal.

I started spiralling, spinning in an endless void of silence.

Everything I knew plummeted into nothingness. It went dark. I woke up in a white room.

White, elaborate tiles hugged the walls leaving no gap, no space of air; intricate chandeliers descended from the ceiling. My vision was a blur.

I looked to my left and peered out the window beside what I presumed to be a bed. My bed? A pair of grey curtains drooped over the windowsill and spilled onto the floor in elegant, orderly fashion, Embellished, embroidered with sophisticated patterns and designs.

My eyes started to sting, from the blinding, bright white hue of light. Concern, confusion and thoughts flooded my mind. Where am I?

Who am I?

I tried to talk. Nothing but a few mumbles escaped my lips. Not anything anyone could decode or unscramble. I tried, again to move my limbs to no avail. I looked down and saw thick crimson red filled tubes snaking up my arm.

The heavy, dark oak doors started to open. Then they stopped, left ajar. Followed by a few whisperings. "Amelia". Is that my name? I thought as the door then swung open.

People rushed to my bedside. Unfamiliar, unwelcoming faces stood tall over me. Well, I should say eyes. Their faces were mainly covered with a full-face visor. Just a small see-through plastic window hovering over the eyes. I zone out, overwhelmed by the masses of people. By the questions. "Amelia! Amelia!" I heard distantly, repeated over and over.

As I woke up the flies were my only friends. I waited. Then drifted off to sleep. I was awakened by a some-what familiar face. Then to my surprise I remembered. My dad. A sense of relief and happiness coursed through me. A familiar face.

He told me to sit up. I looked down, the tubes were gone. I pulled myself up.

He spoke out to me, "Amelia, how are you feeling? Unsure about the answer I shrugged my shoulders.

"Why am I here?" I said in a strained voice. He looked down.

"You were in an accident... A serious one." he continued.

"How serious?"

"A car accident. You collided with another car. You're mostly fine. But your face got mutilated." Well, that's what they told him ... I know what really happened. He handed me a mirror. I stared into it, disgusted. A lump of metal was attached to my face. It looked as if I were a part of a steampunk-cyber-movie. It covered my whole face up to my hairline, down to my jaw. I hated it.

I just wish I could go back in time and change my wish...

Mrs O'Kelly

11. Library News & Updates

Manga Club Meeting 10 Feb 15:15-16:00

We will be running a meeting for members of our Manga Club after school on Wednesday. This will be a chance to catch up; for students to share what they have been reading or watching and to play some Manga themed games. All students are welcome to attend. If they would like to join, they should contact Miss Ling on Teams or by email.

Reading Resources for Remote Learning

We have compiled a number of resources to support students with reading at home. Please see the document: Reading During Remote Learning attached. If you haven't had a chance yet, please do explore the various links and resources with your child.

Staff Read-a-Long

We are currently reading The Railway Children by E Nesbit as part of our staff read-a-long. Each day, a new chapter is released, read by a different member of staff from the Academy. A playlist of all the current chapters can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/3jwqOqd>

NB. The Railway Children was published in 1906 and reflects the attitudes and language of the time. Certain passages do not reflect the modern values of mutual respect and tolerance that we uphold in the Academy and may cause offence to some listeners. That being said, books can be a great gateway for discussion. If you listen to the story as a family, you could use this as an opportunity to start a discussion with your child around issues of prejudice and racism.

Miss Ling
Librarian

12. Career News

- Yet again, 'Speakers for Schools' have put together an exciting schedule of talks accessible for free. For the week commencing 8 February, these include 'Maths without Numbers', the world of media and entertainment, Social Media, Film and TV and most importantly, Student Motivation

during Lockdown. To access these talks go to <https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

- Careers website Icanbea has developed a new CV building tool which is an ideal starting point for Year 7, 8 and 9 students to prepare for their futures. The guide also includes a fast-track personal statement builder which uses suggestions and prompts to help students create that all important personal statement which can sometimes be so difficult.

The CV Wizard takes students through each step, prompting them for all the essential information required to help them create a personal CV. They have a range of templates, fonts, and colours to choose from before previewing and downloading the completed document. Users can create as many CV's as they wish and save and re-visit them at any time.

It is an ideal way to get students started on their first CV and includes a fast-track personal statement builder which uses suggestions and prompts to help students create that all important personal statement which can sometimes be so difficult. Go to <https://www.icanbea.org.uk/>

- In the spirit of ThursDARES, and with a touch of Spring in the air, our Sector of the Month for February is 'Sports and Leisure'. This is a broad area which not only covers careers within professional sport but also encompasses exciting roles within the leisure industry such as personal fitness training, event management, sports journalism and photography. Many of our Football Academy students have gone on to exciting careers in the sports world, both closer to home and across the Atlantic and there is considerable interest amongst younger students about careers and courses in this sector. For a taster of the Sector, including links to some brilliant Youtube videos, please go to <https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/sports-leisure-35/>

Ms Davies

13. Attendance

I hope you are all keeping well. Please remember, you can continue to use the student.absence@open-academy.org.uk email to inform us of any illness of your son/daughter during this lockdown or if they are self-isolating. Many thanks.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

14. Chaplain's Reflection

This Week's Reflection

<https://youtu.be/rObo0IDbeag>

[Don't Worry, Be Happy. 4/2/21](https://youtu.be/rObo0IDbeag)

Dealing with our thoughts.

youtu.be

I just want to encourage you with a few thoughts today. Our minds can be a bit of a battle ground, and It's a place where good thoughts and negative thoughts war against each other. During these times, our minds can follow patterns of worry and fear which can lead us to very dark places. I want to encourage you to

look at where your mind wanders to. To unpack this, it's basically like getting on the wrong bus or train in our physical world and going in completely the wrong direction to where we want to go.

We have to be mindful of our minds and interrupt thoughts of worry. Practical things we can do to interrupt these patterns are by not spending too much time on your own. Spend time with your families, pick up the phone and call someone. When thoughts of worry start to take over, pick up a book, turn the tv on, do some painting or do anything that will call a halt to damaging thought patterns.

Although sometimes this won't change our circumstances, it enables us to be better equipped to deal with them.

The Bible talks about this and it says, "Take every thought into captivity", in other words, arrest the negative thoughts and lock them away in isolation and don't go back to them.

In closing, I want to share a verse that is a constant encouragement and help to me. It says "Cast all your cares on God because he cares for you. It means literally throwing our worries and pain at God and Him catching them and dealing with them. A practical example of this for all faiths and none, is to write down those negative thoughts on a piece of paper, screw it up and then throw it into the bin. Try it, it really works.

I pray that God would continue to strengthen us in mind, body and spirit. Have a great week. You are all in my thoughts and prayers.

God bless you.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain