

Open Academy Update 7 May 2021

For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child.

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to this week's newsletter and after a welcome breather of the bank holiday, we are eyes down and focussed on the next few weeks in the run up to half term.

Assessments

There is much assessment underway in the Academy at the moment and not just for the Year 11s and 13s as we collect and collate evidence for their external grades this year. Key stage 3 students have been undertaking standardised tests from GL assessments - a national company which provides testing in core subjects to show how well students are progressing. Interim analysis shows that many students are indeed now progressing well - certainly compared to when we first returned and carried out similar tests in September. By the end of term all students will have undergone testing and assessment so that we have a good picture of how well we have managed to get them going again this year and to ensure we can plan for the next academic year to meet their needs.

Leaving dates and activities - please see the separate letter from Mr Ward

We are sharing today a detailed letter from Mr Ward regarding the run in to the final leaving date for Year 11 and 13 - and indeed beyond as there are lots of exciting developments on the way after half term.

We are really conscious of how much the Year 11s and 13s have missed out on and so Mr Ward's letter details our plan to offer internships for either Year 13 or students in Year 11 who are opting to stay with us into Year 12.

The program is not compulsory. However, after a two-week training and development program which the Year 11s/13s will, if they sign up for it, undertake voluntarily, they will then be invited to earn a £75 Amazon voucher for each week for the next 3 weeks for completing 15 hours of peer teaching and 9 hours of personal development and next steps preparation for themselves. We think this will be a great way to ensure the students move on to their next stage in education as well prepared as possible - we know we cannot get the COVID lockdown times back - but we are determined to use the time we have got this summer to support successful transitions all round.

With a celebration event for students planned and prom (more information to follow from the Year 11 team), the rest of their time with us looks action packed for the examination year groups. So what about the rest of the Academy?

Summer curriculum

The internship program for the leavers is one half of a plan that will see us radically adapt our curriculum for the last 3 weeks of term. Faculties will work together on a common theme designed to get us well and truly out of the 'stuck here' mindset that set in during the various lockdowns. Our internship students will work with small groups of students on the project work, which will be ongoing across the Academy, to ensure that the catching up of key skills for some, will sit easily alongside re-finding the reason for education for others. Traditional faculty structures will give way to the development of guilds for the last few weeks and students will learn through guild-based project work supported by peers as well as teachers. We have just had the go ahead from Governors and we will be funding this activity from our COVID testing funds from our successful testing processes. Over the next few weeks we will be sharing 'teaser materials' whilst leaders and staff plan the detail, but along with the new Year 7s who will join us for a week of induction during the penultimate week - exciting times are planned ahead!

A couple of practicalities

But before I get too far ahead of myself this week there are a couple of more down to earth issues that I need to raise. The first is genuinely a huge thank you and well done regarding school uniform. Almost everyone is getting it right so we are now on to the tricky little standards bits now - lots of boys have shot up and at the same time thinned out over lockdown, which means lots of them could do with a belt to keep their shirt tucked in - it would be appreciated if you could help us with this. A further reminder too is that skirts, where worn, must be at least knee length and trousers must be proper trousers, not leggings. Some students are struggling to tuck their shirts in as the trousers they are wearing aren't trousers - they are leggings - these must not be worn please so if you could bear that in mind as you shop that would be really appreciated.

The final note this week is about cycling to and from school. Many cycle safely with helmets on and visible clothing. However, I have had a couple of reports of students wheelieing down the road causing vehicles to swerve and distracting drivers. The roads are dangerous enough and this behaviour will inevitably lead to an accident, so please talk to your child if they come by bike. We reserve the right to not allow individual students to bring their bikes on site if they are caught doing this, as not only does it bring the school in to disrepute, but it is also clearly unsafe for them and other road users. We know at least one of the reports was not our students, but I would like to be clear that we will not tolerate poor behaviour on the roads. Oh and whilst I'm on the subject of road and cars - can I respectfully ask that unless your child has a disabled badge and requires the use of the disabled spaces at the start and end of the day, that you please leave the spaces free for those that need them.

I'll stop now so you have time to read the rest of the news!

Jon Ford
Principal

Contents:

1. Food Allergies or Intolerances
2. PE Kit
3. Year 7 News
4. Year 8 News
5. Year 9 News
6. Year 10 News
7. Year 11 News
8. Careers
9. Library News
10. Attendance
11. Chaplain's Reflection

1. Food allergies or intolerances

Please see attached a letter from our catering supplier who are reviewing which students have food allergies. In order to ensure our records are up to date, if your child has an allergy or intolerance and purchases food or drink from our canteen we would be grateful if you could return the attached form as soon as possible.

Where information is held about a student with an allergy or intolerance our system will alert the canteen staff to not allow the purchase of certain items. Therefore, it is important the information we hold is up to date to avoid refusal of purchases.

If you have any concerns please speak to the relevant Head of Year.

Mrs Appleby
Business Manager

2. PE Kit

As we move into what should be warmer, drier weather, please could I remind everyone that the academy PE kit policy states that students must be in the correct kit for every lesson. This kit is a white polo t-shirt, black shorts or jogging bottoms and if needed a black jumper/jacket. If black shorts and jackets are not possible, we would accept a navy or dark grey version for now.

No other colours are permitted.

It is now not appropriate for students to wear their big winter coats in lessons and certainly not in kit which is not as listed above.

We will be reminding students of this each lesson and ensuring the policy is being followed.

Mr Richardson
Teacher

3. Year 7 News

Welcome to this week's newsletter. This week has seen the start of Year 7 assessments. Students have been very well behaved in the assessments. Well done all.

A reminder regarding lateral flow tests. There is a number of students who have yet to submit any lateral flow test results on Test Register. Hopefully they are all testing regularly, but haven't recorded their results. Can the results please be recorded on the Test Register site first, after submitting result you will be redirected to the government website.

Thank you to parents/carers for the support with uniform. We are now seeing very few hoodies in the year group. If your child is not in correct uniform can you please let the year team know.

All absences must be reported to the school on a daily basis, unless you have informed us otherwise. We have seen an increase of absence without a justified reason. As a school we have to report to Norfolk County Council the reason for a student's absence.

Learning HUBS are still continuing, can you please remind your child that they should attend if it is on their timetable.

There are still a small number of laptops loaned to students during lockdown that have not yet been returned. Can we please ask parents/carers to check that these have been returned, if not can they be returned on Monday.

The assessments are continuing for the year group. We are pleased to announce that reading assessment results are in and there has been some amazing progress. Some students will be receiving a certificate in recognition of their outstanding achievement.

Achievements this week:

The year group has received over 1500 achievement points this week, which is fantastic. The top students are Tia-Louise Pickering, Lauren Smith, Max Laskey, Keira Boyd, Thomas Hardy and Keeley Young.

Top Tutor group this week is – D7 Mr Walters – Well done D7

Mrs Hewitt-Coleman - Head of Year 7
Mrs Lamb and Miss Whitwood – Assistant Heads of Year 7

4. Year 8 News

No update.

Miss Lines – Head of Year 8
Mrs Smith – Assistant Heads of Year 8

5. Year 9 News

Assessments have been carried out this week and there will be a few next week. We are proud of the students' attitude and they have taken them in their stride.

Our leadership team and prefects have been busy this week with tasks and we are grateful for the support they have given the school.

Our Sports Leaders enjoyed another Kin-Ball session on Thursday evening until the ball burst, but it will be fixed and ready to go again next week.

Congratulations to Gerrard Sandell who wins a £5 Amazon voucher for having 100% attendance for the week 26 April 2021 to 30 April 2021. Many congratulations Gerrard.

Our top achieving students this week are: Lucy Birkett, James Hoye, Dalia Rosca, Toby Thompson, Kimora Alexander, Lola Pauling, Kasia Jolly, Summer MacCormack, Owen Middleton and Alfie Skerritt. Well done to you all.

Our Praise Club members this week are: Erin O'Neill, Ella Iftimie-Hau, James Self, Toby Cane, and Torri Ashton. Congratulations to all of you and you were picked for always trying your best in school.

Could you please remind students to bring a mask into school and a spare. We are supplying quite a few each day again now. Hopefully we won't be wearing them for much longer!

We are focussing on the importance of reading over the next term. It is essential that students bring a reading book into school. Please see the library section of this newsletter. We will be thinking of a competition to help engage students in reading more.

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

6. Year 10 News

We've had another great week in Year 10. The students are all working hard and uniform seems to be improving across the year group, so thank you to parents for your continued support in ensuring that the students arrive to school correctly dressed and ready to learn. Our next challenge is to ensure that all students are wearing the correct footwear. To remind parents our appearance policy states:

The Academy wants all students to grow into healthy adults. We believe that it is dangerous for students to wear shoes that have platform soles or high heels, so we do not permit students to wear such shoes in the Academy. Neither do we allow students to wear trainers to the Academy; this footwear is appropriate for sport, but is not in keeping with the smart, business like appearance of our Academy uniform. We ask that all children wear a full shoe which can be polished.

We have some really exciting initiatives going on for the students in Year 10 at the moment. We have been lucky enough to secure some academic mentoring; these are such valuable opportunities for the students, so am pleased we have been able to offer 25 students the chance to do this.

As usually we'd like to celebrate the students who are getting the most amount of achievement points – our top 5 for this week are:

Mackenzie Culley	16
Katie Lambert-Sharp	10
Amelie Treacy	9
Bradley Bland	9
Alex Money	9

Keep up the good work! Our LEARNT focus for next week is NOW, there will be plenty of opportunities for the students to get achievement points by showing that they are fully present in the lesson and ready to learn – in the NOW!

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 10
Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 10

7. Year 11 News

No update.

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 11
Mrs Middleton – Assistant Head of Year 11

8. Careers

Our Sector of the Month for May is Human Resources and Administration, an overview of which can be found at:

<https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/hr-administration-92/>

The sector covers all areas of employment which involve administration and organisational skills, specialising in human resources and recruitment, and dealing with customers both virtually and face to face. Many of us will have experience of these kinds of roles and understand how vital it is for our students to learn the 'soft' skills necessary to work with a wide variety of people. These skills were highlighted recently by our Enterprise Adviser, Colin Gant at Aviva who emphasised the importance of being a good listener and be interested in learning new skills. If you have experience of working in this field and would like to record a short video describing your role which could be shown to students please contact caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk

Don't forget - all Open Academy students now have access to our fantastic careers information platform Unifrog. Logging in via www.unifrog.org is easy with an Open Academy email address and by setting a personalised password. Please take a moment to have a look at the website with your child and explore what Unifrog has to offer. It contains a wealth of information on just about any career path/job interest or course you might think of and also contains useful guidance on study skills, making applications and managing well-being. Parents who are interested in having their own login should contact Caroline Davies (see email address above) and this can be easily arranged.

Ms Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

9. Library News

Year 7-9 ReadFit Challenge

All students in Year 7-9 have now received their ReadFit booklets in their English lessons. ReadFit is a six-week programme of daily reading challenges that increase over time. This has been designed to boost students reading stamina. By the end of the programme students will read for twenty minutes a day. [Please watch this video if you would like more information.](#)

Why should you encourage your child to take part?

Students who read for twenty minutes a day are exposed to nearly 2 million words in a year and often score in the top ten percent in standardised tests. Recent research also shows the benefits regular reading has on students' performance in their GCSEs- on average students who read performed better in all subjects, and it might surprise you to know that the biggest impact was in Science!

Reading can also be a relaxing activity with benefits for [mental health and wellbeing](#). This can be particularly useful as part of night-time routines. Turning off screens before bed and reading a book can improve your sleep and make you feel more rested.

Over the past few weeks we have put together a series of resources for parents and carers to support reading at home. [This can now be viewed on our website by clicking this link.](#) If you would like any individual support please do get in touch and I will be happy to discuss this with you.

Book in your Bag

A reading book is an essential part of school equipment and students should have one with them every day. Students are welcome to bring in a book from home or borrow a book from the school library. This week we have begun to reward students who have their reading book with them by issuing raffle tickets. At the end of the term, all tickets will be put in a prize draw with chocolatey rewards on offer for those whose name is drawn. We will also reward those students with the most raffle tickets overall.

Book Tokens Competition

Help us win £5000 to spend on new books for the school library and be in the chance of winning £100 for yourself too. To enter, go to <https://www.nationalbooktokens.com/schools> and nominate Open Academy.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The following clubs are taking place in the library after school next week:

Creative Writing Club: for Year 7 on Tuesday, and Year 8 and 9 on Thursday

Manga Club: for Year 10 and 11 on Wednesday.

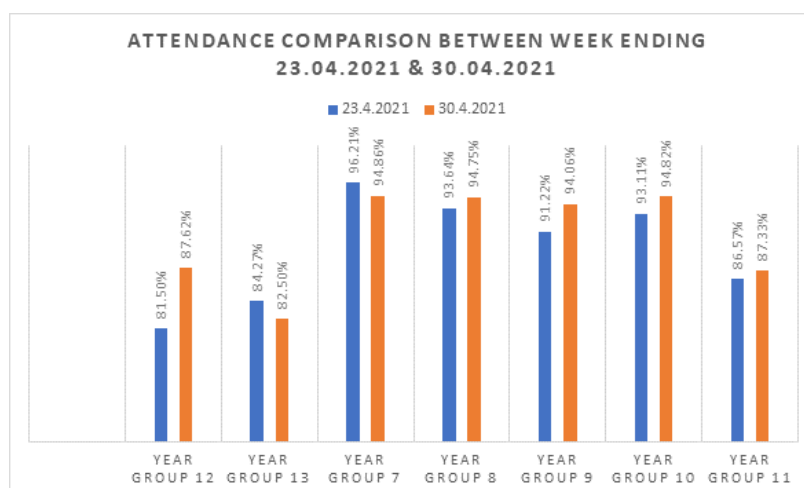
Students are also welcome to use the library for private study. We are also welcoming students to come along and create a piece of artwork for our [library competition](#) (art supplies provided.) If your child would like to attend we ask that you please [click here to sign them up.](#)

Miss Ling
Librarian

10. Attendance

1213CANGGO	90.27%
1213JTH	79.79%
1213LWK	86.36%
C7ABR	93.33%
D7NWA	97.69%
I7RBR	92.41%

R7SNA	95.36%
SRB7EOK	100.00%
C8SDD	92.24%
D8LGA	98.15%
I8RPH	95.37%
R8CDI	93.10%
SRB8EOK	90.00%
C9TTH	93.02%
D9ATH	91.70%
I9BLU	94.58%
I9SMC	97.20%
SRB9EOK	93.33%
C10KMU	99.57%
D10RHA	92.00%
I10ERO	90.29%
R10NST	98.31%
C11TSM	86.78%
D11MKN	93.25%
I11SRE	87.39%
R11CSM	88.39%
SRB11EOK	33.33%



Well done to all those tutor groups highlighted, who have the highest attendance in their year group/SRB/Sixth form.

An amazing 342 students (including our 6th Form) had achieved 100% attendance for the month of April 2021. Well done! Achievement points will be given to all of those students shortly. Well done to you all!

A big shout out to Gerrard Sandell who wins a £5 Amazon voucher for having 100% attendance for the week 26 April 2021 to 30 April 2021. Many Congratulations Gerrard!

Is my child 'too ill' for school?

There are clear government guidelines for schools that say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. The below guidance taken from the NHS website and includes information on common childhood illnesses where school is missed when it needn't be. It is vital to follow this, as we will not authorise your child's absence if we feel they are well enough to be in school (this could lead to consequences for parents/carers, which we would like to avoid!):

Coughs and colds - It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Sore throat - You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a fever, they should stay at home until it goes away.

Menstrual Cramps - School should not be missed due to 'the time of the month'. A supply of paracetamol etc. can always be kept in school in order to take this when required. Please complete a form available at Reception. We also have an emergency supply of pads and tampons obtainable within school.

Conjunctivitis - You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits - There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You should treat your child and send them into school.



In order to keep all of your child's details up to date, please inform ourselves of any change of address, telephone numbers etc.

In addition, if there are any changes to medical conditions, allergies, food tolerances etc, these are also to be notified to ourselves.

You can update your details using the Parent App as well as informing us direct.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

11. Chaplain's Reflection



One of the greatest things we can do in our lives is to take time to remain still. The news, social media and general life bombard us with one crisis after another. This can clutter our minds with confusion, fear and anxiety, and can also promote feelings that don't make us feel good.

On every screen we own, of which there are many, the pace of life seems to speed along and is difficult to control. The general grind of life also wears us down and seems to never stop. Every one of us are faced with the noise and chaos of our time. In this day and age, we can be overstimulated, overscheduled, busy and lonely at the same time. All of us have the power to stop and take time to think and seek some peace.

I saw this quote by Ryan Holiday and it says this:

"It is difficult to think clearly in rooms filled with other people. It's difficult to understand yourself if you are never by yourself. It's difficult to have much in the way of clarity and insight if your life is a constant party and your home is a construction site. Sometime you have to disconnect in order to better connect with yourself and with the people you serve and love. Stillness is important."

In closing the Bible mentions a situation when Jesus and his disciples were on the Sea of Galilee and a storm developed, and because of this the disciples were in fear of their lives. The story goes on to say that Jesus spoke to the storm and said "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. When the storms rage in our lives, Jesus is only a prayer away to calm our situations, but let's also take time and tell ourselves to be still and be quiet, there is great power in that. Lay the phone, tablet, or device aside and take time to spend in reflection and quietness, it's a life changer.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain