

## **Open Academy Update 14 May 2021**

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

Dear Parents/Carers

Dear all welcome to this week's newsletter. After quite a long introduction last week I will try to keep things short and sweet this week so you can get into your areas of interest quickly.

The main news this week is that as of Monday, the rules are changing regarding face coverings in school.

As usual we want to make sure everyone feels as safe as the guidance allows so we will be taking a line which allows freedom of choice for students and to some extent, staff. So as of Monday, 17 May, the compulsory wearing of face coverings in school for students is finished. For some this will be a welcome sigh of relief, for others a potential to worry. Please try not to!

Do be reassured that we will continue to take the rest of the steps we have in place to keep our community safe so essentially.

In line with the national guidance

- Students will not be required to wear a face covering in communal areas or classrooms unless they wish to continue to do so.
- Staff and adult visitors will need to continue to wear face coverings when in communal areas (such as staffrooms when social distancing is not possible) and when circulating in the corridors.
- Staff no longer need to wear face coverings when teaching from the front but can do so if they wish.
- Staff will continue to wear a face covering if circulating within a class.
- If students use public transport, they will still require face coverings when travelling.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this change, please contact your child's pastoral team

So, in the light of this news, I would ask that we all ensure we are continuing to complete our regular lateral flow testing twice per week. Whatever the national picture is, locally we have had more positives than at any point in the pandemic, but these are being picked up before people have symptoms and become infectious through the lateral flow testing - if in doubt - do a test!

I was delighted to see the positive progress being made by many of the students since lockdown and I hope you will enjoy reading of the success of our HUBS catch up program and our future plans later in this bulletin and in subsequent bulletins from Mr Ward.

Shortly I will be emailing out the two-yearly parent survey, where it will be great to get some feedback on how you feel we have been doing to support your children and the community through these challenging times and now that we are on the road to recovery.

And finally, this week I will share just how excited I am that now we have the go ahead for our summer internship program, planning is under way for an exciting and very different end of the year. Year 11 who are choosing to stay on at open for 6th Form, plus leaving Year 13s will have the opportunity to sign up for the internship program - watch out for the letter on its way shortly! With a chance to earn up to £375 of Amazon vouchers each, do something useful for the community and prepare for the next steps in study - this has got to be a tempting opportunity for many! We hope this is the first of a starting tradition so don't worry Year 12 and Year 10, your chance will come next year. This year you will get the benefit of support from your peers too! As for Key Stage 3, we are planning a guild-based curriculum which should be quite different from the normal school experience for the last 3 weeks - keep watching this space as details emerge!

So with one final plea for you to speak to your children regarding safe cycling please - as we are likely to need to start banning those students who cannot ride safely on the roads from bringing their bikes and scooters to school. Thank you for your continued support in driving safely on and around the site - particularly in respecting the need for disabled badge holders and only to use the area near the entrance at peak times, I will just say enjoy the weekend!

Jon Ford  
Principal

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## **1. Progress of Students**

We all hear in the press about the damage done during the pandemic and its aftermath to the education of students. There have been a lot of opinions on what might have happened and why. There has been very little evidence. In September and over the past 2 weeks, Years 7 to 10 have been completing online assessments across a range of subjects. We have found that on average students that did not manage to learn well during lockdowns have fallen behind. However, with a mixture of HUBS and academic mentoring, along with the adapted curriculum that the teachers have been delivering, much of that has been caught up.

The national average learning loss is estimated to be 0.8 GCSE grades per subject on average due to the lockdowns and disruption to school life.

At Open Academy in Year 7 the gap is currently 0.3. The students in HUBS are those who may need more help to catch up. There are some students who have already caught up. We have put in extra mentoring for those who did not complete enough of the Year 6 reading curriculum. It has worked well.

At Open Academy in Year 8 and 9 the gap is currently 0.2 so much better than the national picture. The students in HUBS are those who may need more help to catch up. There are many students who have already caught up and some are even ahead of where we would expect them to be at this time.

In Year 10 reading ages have continued to rise. How well we read is the biggest indicator of future GCSE success. Those students who read regularly tend to score much higher than their non-reading peers.

We will have exams for Year 10 and 12 in this term to check on their progress. We can't be prouder of the Year 11 and 13s. Despite everything that has been thrown at them they are working so incredibly hard to do themselves justice in the last few weeks of their courses.

The results of the tests we have done are still coming in and we are very excited to share the information with each parent in the form of a report as soon as we are able. The majority of Year 7 reports are going out in the post tonight.

It is worth considering that in total we can see that thousands of hours of learning were lost during the pandemic from start to finish. So far, we have caught up 12000 hours in HUBS. This is the best intervention that is in place. Students are effectively getting hours of extra schooling every week to catch up. Those who are caught up are free to get on with their homework and interests. We have already benefitted from 650 hours of government funded tutoring, in addition we have paid for extra support totalling a further 2200 hours. We have ambitious plans for the summer by engaging interns. Our hardworking Year 11 and 13 students are going to inspire the rest of the school.

Mr Ward  
Vice Principal

## **2. Parent Governor Vacancy**

The Governing Body currently has a vacancy for a Parent Governor. A letter giving more details about the position and the wonderful opportunity it affords you will be emailed out early next week. Please keep your eyes peeled!

Mrs Shorten  
Clerk to the Local Governing Body

## **3. Year 7 News**

As you will all be aware Year 7 Parents Evening is taking place on Tuesday, 18 May. This is a wonderful opportunity for Parents/Carers to speak with your child's subject teachers to gain an understanding of how well they are doing and what their next steps might be to make maximum progress. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to make appointments with every teacher they have so that you get an accurate picture of their time at Open Academy so far. If you are unable to get an appointment with a teacher and you would like an update from them, please contact me at [Bethany.whitwood@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:Bethany.whitwood@open-academy.org.uk) so that I can do my best to make an alternative discussion at a later date. If following parents evening, you have any concerns about your child then please don't hesitate to contact me, and I will be happy to have further discussions with yourself.

If you still don't understand after reading in this newsletter how parents evening will be working virtually, please do give us a call or email so we can support you with this. Tutors will also be going through this with students during tutor time.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing and speaking to some of you on Tuesday.

The majority of students are abiding by the rules of not wearing coats and hoodies around the Academy so thank you to parents/carers for your support on this. Detentions will be given if we persistently see students wearing these around the academy.

A reminder that energy drinks are a banned item in school and if seen they will be confiscated. It has been reported that a number of students have had energy drinks on the way to school. This is having a negative effect on their behaviour in school and leading to behaviour points and sanctions. Can parents/carers please discourage students from having these drinks. We are also trying to discourage blue lolly pops. Some students are showing more lively behaviour when they have had these.

Shout outs

A number of students were treated to breakfast this week for the most points for the LEARN'T behaviour – well done to, Lucy-Rose Brown, Amelie Dalton-Cozic, William Della Corte, Millie Hagger, Laurence

Hawkins, Lillymae Hogarth, Lily- Mae Holmes, Areen Mohammed Ali, Daisy Norris - Waterfield, Isioma Onuchukwu, Theo Powley, Honey Robertson, Rebecca Shapcott, Mohammed Suliman, George Tozer-Smith, Kian Wright, Maizi Youngs – Awesome job everyone.

George Tozer-Smith and Rebecca Shapcott fantastic work in German.

Laurence Hawkins for special effort in following the Open Way.

Charlie Mann, Harley Ringer, Viktoria Kenanova, Tyler Paul and Tia-Louise Pickering for the highest achievement points this week.

Congratulations to I7 Mr Brown's tutor group who have the highest achievement points this week.

Teamwork is next week – This is another opportunity for students to get achievement points – The highest team gets a reward from Mr Wilkinson.

The Library is open on a Thursday lunchtime for year 7 students, this is another fabulous resource and Miss Ling does some amazing work with our students. Please encourage your child to attend the library. All students should always have a reading book in their school bag, along with the correct equipment.

Hub sessions are continuing and we are seeing the benefits for those students attending with their progress and confidence. We are reviewing the students who attend hub sessions and further students may be asked to attend after half term.

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

#### **4. Year 8 News**

Hello from the Year 8 Team!

A really positive week for our Year 8s and an excellent week for earning achievement points! Over 20 Year 8 students were invited to a celebratory free breakfast on Thursday morning for their contribution the Open Way, with particular emphasis on RESPECT. Well done to those students and a big shout out to Mayling Thomas, Jake Tyler, Jay Lawson, Arturas Kieras, Ariya and Ara Rashid, Michaela Browne, Amelia Raybould, Elisha Jones, Kai Man, Joel Walker, Ella Ramm, Athanasios Chatzopoulos, Emily Summers, Star Cook and Lewis Scrivener for earning over 20 achievement points EACH this week – fantastic job!

Furthermore, Ariya Rashid and Jay Lawson took part in the National Reading Champions Quiz this week, along with Year 9 students where they place 15<sup>th</sup> out of 34 teams! On top of this, we have been running our 'Secret Mission Possible' project this week with great success. Each morning, 4 students are selected to take part in a secret mission to earn achievement points throughout the day and so far, over 90% of our teams have succeeded! Keep an eye out for yours next week!

Attendance for our year group is steadily improving, so thank you for your continued support and regularly submitting your COVID tests. However, we have noticed quite a few students that are very keen to get to school and have been arriving well before 8.20 in the morning. Staff morning duties only begin at 8.30 and so there is no adult supervision before this time. We therefore ask you to ensure students are not arriving too early for school for safety purposes.

A reminder may appear elsewhere in the newsletter, but we are now asking students to hand in their mobile phones during a detention after school. Should your child receive a detention in the future, please could you prepare them for this eventuality.

Finally, we have an exciting sporting opportunity next week on Wednesday after school! The Year 11 Prefect Team are running a Kin Ball session in the Sports Hall between 3-4pm where students can have a

good old run around and walk away as the winning team. Voluntary contributions are welcome as this is part of the fundraising project for Year 11 Prom, but drinks and snacks will be provided for a small fee. Please encourage your child to go along as they'll be in the same position in only 3 years' time!

Wishing you a wonderful weekend.

Miss Lines – Head of Year 8

Mrs Smith – Assistant Head of Year 8

## **5. Year 9 News**

Our assessments are over now in Year 9 and the students have coped with them brilliantly, although some are feeling tired. We have another two weeks until half term so let's keep going. Our attendance in Year 9 has improved over the past week - thank you for all your efforts.

Our top achieving students this week are: Lucy Birkett, James Hoyer, Dalia Rosca, Toby Thompson, Jamil Ali, Tommy Bluett, Angelos Chatzopoulos, Ryan Howes, Oliver King, Summer MacCormack, Robbie Ruff and Zac Skells. Congratulations to you all. We had a record making 1,469 achievement points awarded to year 9 over the past week. Well done to everyone.

The following students were rewarded with breakfast yesterday morning for having the most Respect achievement points over the past week – well done to Ryan Howes, Rhy-Lee Dawson, Erin O'Neill and James Hoyer.

Our Praise Club members this week enjoyed a treat on Wednesday. Well done to Isla Gardner, Jayden Muzembe, Jay Bartram and Sean Passmore.

Congratulations to James Hoyer and Dalia Rosca in the Reading Champions Quiz (full details in the library section of this newsletter). We are extremely proud of you.

There is a Kin-Ball Tournament after school on Thursday, 20 May which all Year 9s are welcome to join in. Year 11 are running the tournament for free, but any donations would be welcome to go towards the Year 11 Prom in June.

A reminder that homework is set on Teams for all students. As teachers cannot mark books at the moment homework is extremely important so teachers can assess whether students have understood the work in class. Any issues with this or anything else please contact Mr Lambert or Mrs Roe.

Mr Lambert – Head of Year 9

Mrs Roe – Assistant Head of Year 9

## **6. Year 10 News**

I'd like to start this week's newsletter by thanking parents for their support in getting students in correct uniform. We are seeing far less hoodies and trainers – this helps no end with students arriving to school ready to learn and all representing the school smartly.

Well done to Leo Hughes, Katie Lambert-Sharpe, Kamile Reginaite and Tom Walker for earning themselves a free breakfast this week for showing respect around the Academy!

Our HUBS are going really well with students being able to catch up on any missing work from lockdown. We appreciate your continued support with this and would ask that if your child is timetabled to be at HUB you ensure they attend when required – this really will make a difference for their knowledge and confidence as we approach Year 11.

The students with the top five achievements points this week are:

Amber Cleverley	19
Mia Baxter	16
Maisie McCormack	12
Scarlett Taylor	12
Ethan Brown	12

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

## 7. Year 11 News

A letter about Prom has been sent home. We would like all students to attend this event to celebrate the end of their time at high school. No students should miss Prom because of the costs involved. If your child is not considering coming to Prom because of the cost then please contact the Year 11 pastoral team. Through fundraising by staff we can possibly help towards the cost of the ticket, transport and may be able to help with provision of an outfit.

The leavers day will be Wednesday, 9 June. Due to formal GCSE examinations being cancelled there is no need for study leave. When assessments are not taking place in class, teachers are preparing students for assessments and so attendance in all lessons is crucial.

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

## 8. 6<sup>th</sup> Form News

Another excellent week for our 6<sup>th</sup> formers. You have all had a busy few weeks with assessments for Y13 and revision in most classes for both year groups. Well done guys – keep going!

### Y12 Assessments

The Y12 assessments are planned for the week beginning 7 June. Students will be given timetables soon, but in the meantime please make sure that you have spoken to your teachers so that you are aware of how many exams you will be sitting, and what content you need to be revising.

### UCAS – Replying to offers

Most of you by now have made your firm and insurance choices on UCAS. The deadline for these choices is **10 June**. Please make sure that you do not miss this deadline!

### UCAS EXTRA

If you included five choices on your application, have received decisions from all five, and weren't accepted, or if you declined the offers you received, you will be able to use **UCAS Extra**.

If you did not use all your choices in your initial application, you can just sign in to your application and add another choice, as long as it's before 30 June, and you've not accepted or declined any offers. Remember, if you originally only applied to one choice and want to add more, you'll be asked to pay the extra £6 application fee. If you don't hold any offers after 5 July, you will be able to add an additional choice using [Clearing](#).

### Apprenticeships

From May onwards, the vacancies on Apprenticeship schemes begin to appear in advertisements and on web searches. It is now time to begin your search for that amazing apprenticeship that will be the first step on an awesome journey. An apprenticeship is a real job where you learn, gain experience and get paid. You are an employee with a contract of employment and holiday leave. By the end of an apprenticeship, you will have the right skills and knowledge needed for your chosen career. Ms Davies receives regular updates on the vacancies that are advertised. Find out more on the Apprenticeships Norfolk website <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning/apprenticeships>, or take a look at



Amazing Apprenticeships as they have a dedicated Parents' information page <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>

### **Y13 last day**

As per Mr Wards letter in last weeks newsletter, Year 11 and 13 will be having their last official day at the Academy on **Wednesday, 9 June**. If students have completed all assessments and submitted everything that they need to before this date, they need to speak to their subject teachers and myself before they get authorisation to leave earlier than this date. However, students will be invited back on this final official day for celebrations with the rest of the leavers.

### **Textbooks**

Please can Year 13 hand in any textbooks that they have borrowed from teachers by the end of this half term. Text books cost a lot of money, and in previous years we have had to charge students for textbooks not returned. So please check your homes and return anything within the next couple of weeks. Similarly, if you have any textbooks that you have bought but no longer need, we would always love to take them off your hands!

## **9. 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](mailto:caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk)

New Anglia Apprenticeships are currently promoting apprenticeships across Norfolk and Suffolk including their Kickstart programme aimed at young people aged 16-24 from low income families who may be struggling to find an apprenticeship after the pandemic. To research opportunities please follow the link:

[https://v2.apprenticeshipsnewanglia.co.uk/apprenticeships/search/?s\\_location=&s\\_distance=30](https://v2.apprenticeshipsnewanglia.co.uk/apprenticeships/search/?s_location=&s_distance=30) or contact Kaite Lomonosoff at [katie@tracweb.co.uk](mailto:katie@tracweb.co.uk)

Ms Davies  
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

## **10. Library News**

### **Reading Champions Quiz**

This Tuesday some of our most enthusiastic readers came together to compete in the National Reading Champions Quiz. Over 3 hours, students answered 100 questions on children's literature on themes such as villains, mythology and childhood favourites. 34 teams across 22 schools in the region took part in the virtual event, with our students placing 15<sup>th</sup> overall. It was a tough competition, but the students worked brilliantly as a team and had lots of fun celebrating reading too. Well done to our participating students: James Hoyer, Dalia Rosa, Jay Lawson and Ariya Rashid.

### **Book in your Bag – Thank you!**

We have seen a big uptake in students arriving to school with a reading book. Thank you for your support with this. Please continue to remind your child to bring a reading book to school every day. This can be from home or the school library. Our Book in Your Bag raffle will be continuing until the end of term so

those students who are regularly coming into school with a reading book will be entered into a prize draw, collecting a new entry every time they have a book for silent reading.

### **Year 11 and 13 Library Books**

As Year 11 and 13 approach their final weeks with us can we please ask that any library books they have borrowed are returned as soon as possible (ideally before we break up for half term).

### **ReadFit**

Students in KS3 should now be completing their daily reading challenges for ReadFit. At the end of their first full week students should be reading for 8 minutes a day and recording this in their reading log. ReadFit is all about building good habits over time, so congratulations to all of those students who have made it to the end of week one, keep up the good work!

For those who may be struggling to find the time or motivation - remember taking that first step is often the hardest. It can be easy to get distracted and put it off for another day (believe me I have those days too) but we encourage you to think about those small gaps of time when you can fit in some reading. Small daily acts really do build up over time. Maybe it's when you first get home, when you are in the car, or as you go to bed. Figure out what works best for you, find a quiet space, turn off notifications and immerse yourself for the full time set that day. The work you do today are the results you'll see tomorrow!

Students who send in photos of their completed reading logs to me at the end of each week will receive digital badges and a shout out in recognition of their accomplishments.

### **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**

Students are welcome to use the library for private study after school.

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

Manga Club:

Monday – Year 8/9

Friday- Year 7

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 register their place.](#)

Miss Ling

Librarian

## **11. PE and Clubs**

All students in KS3 (Years 7,8 & 9) have been asked to complete a survey. This has been posted on their PE TEAMS channel but can also be found below. It is a great opportunity for students to express their feelings about PE, as we want to try and engage all students within PE and extra-curricular activities. Please complete the survey, following the link below. This survey will give the PE department information, which will help us plan our curriculum and extra-curricular activities for the next academic Year. Please answers the questions truthfully. The questionnaire shouldn't take any more than 15 minutes to complete. Thank you:

<https://wh.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=161849283184&u=pfqnv&V1=1>

Next week sees our first after school extra-curricular activity for quite some time and we are super excited about it! A group of Year 11s are running a Kin Ball tournament to raise money for their Prom. Students who want to participate in the tournament have been asked for a voluntary contribution, however they will still be able to play without making a financial contribution. For those of you who are wondering what Kin



Ball is, please watch this introductory video. It highlights the main rules and techniques that students will be using in the tournament. It's a great inclusive game and has already become really popular with our students:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_eQyr8N9b0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_eQyr8N9b0)

The dates and times are as follows:

Monday, 17 3pm-4pm – Year 7  
 Wednesday, 19 3pm-4pm – Year 8  
 Thursday, 20 3pm-4pm – Year 9

These sessions will replace the HUB sessions that normally take place those days, to allow all students and staff to attend if they wish. Therefore, no HUB for Year 7 on Monday, no HUB for Year 8 on Wednesday and no HUB for Year 9 on Thursday. If any student has any questions, please speak to a member of the PE department.

Ms Whitwood  
 Teacher

## 12. Attendance

Year Group 12	77.78%
Year Group 13	89.15%
Year Group 7	91.90%
Year Group 8	91.90%
Year Group 9	91.96%
Year Group 10	92.84%
Year Group 11	89.17%

Well done to Years 7 and Year 13 for having the highest attendance for week ending 7.5.2021.

Attendance Lottery – Many congratulations to Dylan Morter, tutor group: R7SNA, who has won a £5 Amazon voucher for having 100% attendance for week ending 7 May 2021. Well Done Dylan!

For the week ending 7 May 2021, we had an amazing 427 students from Years 7 to Year 11 and 32 students in the 6<sup>th</sup> form achieving 100% attendance. Well done all!



For any absences, please contact reception or [student.absence@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:student.absence@open-academy.org.uk)

Mrs Ganson  
 Attendance Officer

### 13. Chaplain's Reflection



I want to share with you something different this week. We can face many different situations in our lives that we need lots of courage to get through. The poem below can be of great encouragement to us all. It's called See It Through by Edgar Guest.

*When you're up against a trouble,  
Meet it squarely, face to face;  
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,  
Plant your feet and take a brace.  
When it's vain to try to dodge it,  
Do the best that you can do;  
You may fail, but you may conquer,  
See it through!*

*Black may be the clouds about you  
And your future may seem grim,  
But don't let your nerve desert you;  
Keep yourself in fighting trim.  
If the worst is bound to happen,  
Spite of all that you can do,  
Running from it will not save you,  
See it through!*

*Even hope may seem but futile,  
When with troubles you're beset,  
But remember you are facing  
Just what other men have met.  
You may fail, but fall still fighting;  
Don't give up, whate'er you do;  
Eyes front, head high to the finish.  
See it through!*

Courage in its simplest form is the ability to do something that frightens you and it's also strength in the face of pain and grief. In closing God says this to us through the Bible. "Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed. I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."

God bless you all.

Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain