

Open Academy Update 1 October 2021

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

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the newsletter this week.

I will start by publicly **thanking the amazing staff team, and the hundreds of student volunteers**, who came together to present the academy to the world on Wednesday night for our Open Evening. I have had some amazing feedback about how enjoyable the evening was. We socially distanced the sports hall and put on four talks to ensure we could keep everyone safe, however as it turned out, that was a good job as **we had the highest attendance we have ever seen** on one of these events.

So many students stepping up to show people around, or showcase subjects shows a fantastic commitment to the academy and that the growing sense of support and pride in the academy that the students feel has a momentum of its own.

Next week we will be welcoming prospective 6th Formers to look around. With our re-invigorated football course now in partnership with Sheringham FC, we will be expecting interest from across Norfolk. Our broad flexible approach to meeting the needs and interests of the students means that our offer changes according to demand, and we have a reputation for being incredibly supportive to get students through at 6th Form and on to the full range of academic and vocational subjects at university, further training or indeed employment. So, if you have a child in Year 11, or know someone who does, **I look forward to welcoming you next week on Thursday, 7 October at 6.30pm-8.00pm.**

I should highlight at this point that, along with many schools, **our COVID rate (and suspected COVID rate) has been climbing steadily this week** and we do have more cases than we have had before – over 20 students in various years and two staff. It is therefore vital that we keep following all elements of the government current advice.

From an academy point of view, we have been keeping the authorities informed and as yet their instruction is to remain open to all years and not to send anyone home for isolation. They do, however, say that we must keep promoting all our safety steps including our bubbles, one-way system, hand sanitising, extra cleaning and, where parents and guardians can help, **self-testing twice per week and keeping children home where symptoms, particularly fever with a new dry cough and or stomach ache, are being experienced.** We have also seen some children with cold symptoms testing positive so please err on the cautious side and **if your child does become ill, keep them home and test each day** they have symptoms. Further home tests kits are available on request from the academy, although please note they are the new nasal only swab kits

Finally, this week I wanted to highlight the further success of one of our, just, ex-students. It was fantastic reading about Calvin Smith in the press a few weeks ago thanks to his success at the English schools' athletics championships. I am delighted to report that last weekend, he carried on in winning form and become **International Schools U17 400m champion** and at the same meeting helped the England 4 x 400M Squad to become international champions also. It is always fantastic to track the progress of our students and I am sure you will join me in wishing Calvin all the best for what promises to be an amazing career in sport. Personally, I am hoping to be seeing him at Paris 2024 if that is not too soon for him!

Jon Ford
Principal

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1. **Aspens School Catering**

On the 1 October a new legislation known as Natasha's Law comes into effect. It requires any pre-packaged direct sale foods (PPDS) to be clearly labelled with:

- name of food
- full list of ingredients
- allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list

Aspens have implemented the changes and new processes. Our robust allergy procedure and special diet process will continue to remain the foundation for providing a safe food service for all our customers.

Aspens Services Ltd

2. **Presentation Evening**

On Wednesday, 10 November the academy will be holding our KS4 and KS5 presentation evening. This evening is a great night for us to celebrate the success of current and previous students. Students who will be receiving awards will be contacted shortly with an invite to the evening.

We are looking for parents who may know of any local business or company who would sponsor an award. If you are interested in this, or require any further information then please contact Beth Whitwood (Head of Whole School Rewards) at Bethany.whitwood@open-academy.org.uk

Ms Whitwood
Teacher

3. **Year 7 News**

A big thank you to those students who contributed to the Open Evening on Wednesday for Year 6s. In particular to Martha Wardell and Harvey Eastman who spoke to all parents during the Principal's address. We couldn't have been more proud of how confidently they spoke in front of their audience.

Please check with your child, their Teams account for homework that needs to be completed. All homework must be completed, if not there will be compulsory catch up sessions after half term. Homework club is available after school in the library Wednesday - Friday 3-4pm each week. If your child is having problems completing homework there are Teams video guides on the school website in the student and learning area. Students can also ask their class teacher and tutor for support.

Well done to the following for receiving the most achievement points this week: Martha Wardell, Harvey Eastman, Leonard Read, Kayden Smith -Howell, Hannah Stagg, Bobbin Deacon, Martina Vaskyte and Caitlin Paige.

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 7
Mrs Middleton – Assistant Head of Year 7

4. Year 8 News

WOW! What an amazing group of students we have in Year 8. Lots of students helped with the Open Evening on Wednesday in one way or another, whether it was their work being displayed, helping with the evening or speaking in front of the prospective new parents/students. We are so proud of you all, there are some real super stars in the making.

Students leaderships roles are to be confirmed next week. Look out for the exciting announcements.

A general reminder this week about uniform. As we head into autumn, please refer to the school uniform policy if parents/carers are considering purchasing new items for school. Plain black trousers should be worn pulled up to the waist and it is permitted to wear a plain thin black belt with an unobtrusive buckle. Not "skinny" style hipsters or with unnecessary accoutrements (extra zips, buckles etc.) Plain black knee length skirt. **Outdoor wear:** Any sensible, weatherproof outdoor garment is permitted. (no denim, leather jackets or hooded sweatshirts). Outdoor wear must be removed when entering the school.

Top Tutor group this week: Mr Bradshaw - C8 with a total of 294 points so far this week.

Top achievers this week: Millie Hagger, Hallie Chandler, Isioma Onuchukwu, Lucy-Rose Brown, Kayne Banham, Georgia Brown, Olivia Cooper, Riley Daniels, Roseanne Gardner, Charlie Mann, Theo Powley, Harley Ringer, Rebecca Shapcott, Leah Skipper.

There will be a Year 8 football team run by Mark Pimlott our school Chaplin. We can't wait to see what the team can do. Training will be every Wednesday after school for an hour, starting on Wednesday, 6 October. Students are to meet Mark in the Sports Hall.

More exciting clubs/activities are also taking place or being planned. If your child is interested in participating in any clubs, please ask them to speak to their tutors or the rest of the year team.

Learning Hubs are continuing after school from Monday to Thursday. Students are enjoying the opportunity to complete the work in a calm environment with support. Students have been requested to attend if they haven't completed their homework. This will be reviewed after half term. Some students have asked to attend for support with their homework. Parents/carers please let the year team know if your child would like to attend a Hub session to complete their homework.

Ms Whitwood and Mr Crawford - Heads of Year 8
Mrs Lamb - Assistant Head of Year 8

5. Year 9 News

No update.

Mr Pickup – Head of Year 9
Mrs Smith – Assistant Head of Year 9

6. Year 10 News

Another great week, it's good to see all Year 10 fully settled in their option classes and have had a brilliant start to KS4.

A busy week with vaccinations taking place on Monday and Open Evening on Wednesday. We wanted to say a big thank you for every student that came to support the academy for Open Evening. It was a massive success and the feedback about our Year 10 guides was awesome. We are so proud of them. Thank you to everyone who gave up their time and achievement points will be given out next week.

The leadership team will be revealed on Monday, thank you for all those that applied.

We have lots of students 'tied' at the top of the achievement points list. It's a long list this week but well done to the following: William Orr, Joshua Carter-Strike, Jake Folkes, Lisa Kracewicz, Katie Edge, Joshua Mace, Owen Middleton, Millie Walker, Rose Wheatley, Torri Ashton, Jude Abramson, Isabel Bush, Lucy Birkett, Summer Maccormack, Grace Moreton, Bryn Norris, Charlie Palmer and Tommy Taylor.

Please carry on encouraging your child to do their homework on Teams. Please let us know if there is anything we can support with.

Have a good weekend everyone.

Mr Lambert – Head of Year 10

Mrs Roe – Assistant Head of Year 10

7. Year 11 News

It has continued to be an encouraging start to the year with another 702 achievement points awarded in the past week to Year 11. The students are working hard, they are finding their feet and adjusting well to their 6 period days. Thank you for your continued support with the latter.

A big thank you also to all the Year 11 students who gave up their own time to help out at the Open Evening. We had many positive comments from prospective parents with a specific shout out to Amber Cleverly who was praised for her wonderful tours.

We have also been asked to give a special mention to the whole of Mrs Marsham's maths class whose attitude to work was highly praised.

Please remember that the Greater Norwich Post 16 Opportunities Fair is taking place next Wednesday, 6 October at NCFE Carrow Road from 12-7pm.

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 11

Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 11

8. Sixth Form News

Another really positive week at OA6. I will keep it really brief this week! Please see below a link for UEA taster lectures which are really beneficial to get a feel of what subjects you may want to study at university. Year 13s will very soon be getting ready to apply via UCAS and should by now have started researching courses that they may like to do. Please make sure that they have booked themselves onto some of the lectures below by clicking on the link!

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/information-for/young-people/subject-taster-sessions>

Mrs Molloy
Head of Sixth Form

9. Careers



Parents of Year 11 students, don't forget the Post 16 Opportunities Fair which is happening at the Top of the Terrace at Carrow Road on Wednesday, 6 October. The event is open all afternoon, closing at 7pm allowing time for students to attend with their families. More information can be found in the above flyer.

Mrs Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

10. Library News

Next week is National Libraries week and we will of course be celebrating in the school library. The following activities will be taking place in the library over lunch:

1. Design your perfect library

Inspired by the [13 Storey Treehouse series by Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton](#) we are encouraging students to design their own treehouse floor with a library theme - get creative and be as realistic or fantastical as you like! Student designs will be put together for a display in the library.

2. Spread Kindness

Write a kind or encouraging message to an anonymous reader and leave this in a book for others to find. Why not also take the opportunity to visit your local library and see what they are up to or sign up for a library card (Norfolk Libraries offer Digital Only or Full Membership options for young people.) [Find out more here.](#)

Miss Ling
Librarian

11. Attendance

Rewards – The top tutor group plus the top SRB tutor group, for having the highest attendance over a fortnight, will be awarded an attendance trophy.

Please do continue to let us know of any absences/appointments through Reception or using our Student Absence email address – student.absence@open-academy.org.uk

Please also remember that being late after registration (9.05am), can affect your son/daughter's attendance and so please ensure that they arrive to school on time every day.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

12. Chaplain's Reflection

We go through seasons of life that are really tough sometimes. Seasons that are different maybe to the others around us who seem happy and care free. I just want to encourage you to keep going. The poem written by Samantha Lynch included in this reflection is all about that, and it says this.

*When you feel like giving up
Don't quit
Look around and find blessings abound
Keep going.*

*When your problems seem overwhelming
Don't quit
Take one step at a time
Keep going.*

*When you don't have the answer
Don't quit
Talk to others find the support
Keep going*

*When you are discouraged
Don't quit.
Don't give up
Keep going!*

I also would like to encourage all that are in good seasons at the moment to encourage those that are facing difficult times. Keep going in doing that, as a community we are here for each other, no matter the season.

In closing I quote from the Bible in what God says to us. "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." He is only a prayer away.

Have a wonderful week. God bless you.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain