

Open Academy Update 8 October 2021
For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child.

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to this week's newsletter

This week I can start with some good news in that our spike in COVID cases from last week appears to be subsiding quickly. Whilst we are not taking anything for granted, it is heartening to see that case numbers have almost halved and the vast majority of students are now heading back in to school having recovered quickly from the experience.

Our attendance throughout the pandemic has been very good – a little higher than national average – so I look forward to getting back to that next week, as the vast majority of cases should be able to return next week, and the pandemic has shown us that the best place for students day to day is in school!

On a more positive topic, I was delighted to see so many families here for the 6th Form Open evening last night. Hot on the heels of an incredibly successful main school Open Evening last week, it was fantastic to be discussing the dreams aspirations and possibilities for the Year 11 students as they consider their next steps in education. As I shared with parents last night, our 6th Form has grown rapidly recently as our reputation for providing high levels of support for students grows. We have an innovative internship induction program, which we will be further refining this year, as it has proved so successful in preparing students for life in the 6th Form.

It has been a very busy couple of weeks where we have opened up the academy during the day for tours and in the evening for the open events. Staff could have every excuse to be somewhat jaded, however I must thank all of them for their amazing efforts as they continue to deliver great learning during the day on top of all the excitement of showcasing what we do.

I will finish this week with a huge 'thank you' to you our parents and carers who are doing such an amazing job at helping us raise standards at the academy. We have focussed this year on upping the amount of homework students complete to match that of the average school nationally – almost doubling the expectation we had before. We are also tracking and following up homework far more consistently, and as we are using the Teams app to handle homework, this means that we can track who is doing what (it also means we can switch to 'blended learning' as and when we need to thanks to the odd COVID spike!). Our tracking shows us that so far this term almost 80% of homeworks set have been completed – and the students know that if they regularly don't hand in this crucial work, they will be identified for support Hubs next half term.

The homeworks are designed to test and extend learning and allow teachers to give constructive feedback to the students on how they are getting on and what they should do next. As such it is a vital part of the learning process and I am so pleased that a large majority are getting it done. I will also add an extra thank you that uniform is better than it has ever been, the students look amazing and we hope that helps them develop a sense of pride in both themselves and the academy.

I'll stop there and wish you an enjoyable week ahead – before we know it we will be heading to half term!

Jon Ford
Principal

Contents:

1. **Aspens School Catering**
2. **READY Feasibility Study**
3. **Year 7 News**
4. **Year 8 News**
5. **Year 9 News**
6. **Year 10 News**
7. **Year 11 News**
8. **Sixth Form News**
9. **Careers**
10. **Library News**
11. **Attendance**
12. **Wellbeing**
13. **Chaplain's Reflection**

1. **Aspens School Catering**

Due to a range of factors including disrupted supply chains, job vacancies and uncertainty around fuel delivers, our menus, service and choice may be affected over the coming weeks. As well as occasional substitutes from the expected menu, we have made the choice not to go ahead with the launch of our new menu, until things have stabilised.

Natasha's Law came into effect on 1 October. 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

We 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. **READY Feasibility Study**

The NHS, Hertfordshire University and Watford FC, Norwich City FC, Stevenage FC, Bedfordshire University and UEA are working on "The READY Feasibility Study" which is a research study into how exercise can combat low mood and depression in young people between the ages of 13-17.

We cannot say that exercise is an effective treatment of depression. We can say that people believe that it might be, but it is also possible that social interaction is the important ingredient. The study is designed to find out whether exercise per say has an effect on depression, and whether the exercise has to be high intensity, or whether any exercise would be sufficient.

If you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact me at phillip.wilkinson@open-academy.org.uk

THE READY TRIAL

Take part in research aiming to see if physical activity improves the mood of young people with, low mood, feelings of sadness that won't go away or live with depression

DEPRESSION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN YOUNG PEOPLE
 Depression is reported in around 20% of under 18s. Young people living with depression often delay reaching out for support. There is growing evidence that exercise is a helpful treatment for depression in young people, but larger research studies are needed.

OUR PROGRAMME
 READY is a research study looking at physical activity and its effect on young people (aged 13-17) who have feelings of sadness that won't go away, feel overwhelmed or live with depression. Young people will take part in two 60-minute sessions per week for 12 weeks in one of three groups.

THE GROUPS
HIGH INTENSITY
 Exercises to really get your heart rate up e.g. circuit training, boxing and HIIT sessions
LOW INTENSITY
 Exercises keeping your heart rate at a steady pace e.g. stretching, seated exercises
SOCIAL CONTROL
 No exercise here but group activities such as quizzes, games and escape rooms

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?
WWW.READYTRIAL.CO.UK
READYTRIAL@HERTS.AC.UK
[@readytrial](https://www.instagram.com/readytrial)
[@READYTrial](https://www.facebook.com/READYTrial)

University of Hertfordshire **UH**

Mr Wilkinson
 Assistant Principal

3. Year 7 News

An excellent effort has been made by the vast majority of students completing homework online in Teams. However, please continue to check with your child their Teams account for homework that needs to be completed. A reminder that 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 students for receiving the most achievement points this week:

Kayden Smith-Howell, Evie Timbers, Martina Vaskyte, Harry Bates and Mason Fuller.

And more fantastic news, we have pleasure in announcing our Year 7 Student Leadership Team:

Head Boy: Harvey Eastman
 Head Girl: Rianna Aldous
 Deputy Head Boy: Rodrigo Furia
 Deputy Head Girl: Kiera Paul

Tiffany Scott
 Ada Anil
 Mya Pollard-Gray
 Esme Whitehead
 Ria Wilsea
 Evie Timbers

Millie Clarke
Mae Broom
Jason Juhasz
Zak Lutkin
Kayden Smith-Howell

Congratulations to all of the named students on their roles.

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

4. Year 8 News

It's been an exciting week this week for Year 8. Our focus of the week has been teamwork including Mr Crawford's assembly. A vast majority of the year group are getting things right and learning is progressing. The year group's attitude to learning and engagement has seen a huge amount of achievement points given out, over 5100 have been awarded in September. Behaviour in and around school is on the whole fantastic. Thank you to parents/carers for your continued support.

We have had some strong applications for this year's senior leadership roles. The year team are very excited to be working together with the students. We are pleased to announce the following have been successful in securing senior leadership roles in the year group:

Head students - Isioma Onuchukwu and Areen Mohammed Ali
Deputy Head students – Hallie Chandler and Brian Bolaney
Senior Open Voice representatives – Emilia Kerby and Riley Page
Senior Ambassadors – Lucy-Rose Brown and Riley Daniels
LGBT/Diversity Council representative – Ty Cook

We also have over 35 students who have been successful in becoming learning mentors/ambassadors and open voice representatives. We are looking forward to working together with all the students.

Shout outs this week:

Miss Cheung - Isioma Onuchukwu, Emilia Kerby and Brandon Parfitt for their great participation and attitude in Maths lessons.
Miss Reynolds – Riley Benfield for his engagement and hard work in DT.

Top achievers for September:

Hallie Chandley, Isioma Onchukwu, Millie Hagger, Steven Ellis, Layla Moody, Luke Edge, Charlie Mann, Riley Benfield, Harley Ringer, Lily-Anna Nash.

Top Tutor Group for September:

Congratulations to I8 Mr Munday and Mr Coyne, 1301 achievement points awarded collectively to students in September.

We are looking to develop the students' resilience and perseverance; in their lessons we are encouraging them to complete any extension or challenging tasks, do things first time of asking or without being asked and being considerate to those in the classroom.

A general reminder that hoodies/sweatshirts are not part of the school uniform. We ask that students remove them before they enter school. If your child is cold in school there are school jumpers available to purchase. Leggings or tracksuit bottoms are not part of the school uniform, if your child is not in correct uniform a member of the year team will be contacting parents/carers to discuss. If there is a genuine reason that the students are not in correct uniform we ask that parents/carers contact the school with the

reason. An email can be sent to debbie.lamb@open-academy.org.uk or you can contact the year team on the year team mobile 07949 455922.

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

5. Year 9 News

Two more weeks until half term and Year 9 has continued to improve as a year group. Currently Year 9 has the second-best attendance of the school, which is a great achievement and shows the resilience and perseverance of the students and the hard work of parents/carers.

Achievement points continue to flood in for fantastic behaviour and effort in learning.

The current tally for this week is:

AED – 161
LGA – 231
RPH – 142
NST – 189

Hopefully we can see an even higher total next week.

One area that does need to improve across Year 9 is the learning time missed due to students turning up to lessons late. Students get 4 minutes to move between lessons, if they arrive later than that the time is recorded and made up in detentions on Friday. In total for only this last week 853 late minutes (14.2 hours) have been recorded across Year 9. This is an increase of 55 minutes from the previous week. Hopefully next week we will see a decrease in this time.

If students can arrive on time to all their lessons they will start with a more positive experience and reduce their anxiety, as they will have a greater understanding of the learning taking place in the classroom. If they arrive late they will be starting with a negative experience, which can easily escalate into disruptive behaviour and behaviour points being added.

Please also remember to send students to school with the correct uniform as there have been a growing number not following the school uniform policy. This includes wearing hoodies instead of blazers (or under their blazers), wearing leggings instead of skirts/trousers, and facial piercings (nose studs). Please see the school uniform policy for further clarification.

Attendance to Hubs has been growing this week which is a great sign of the commitment and perseverance of our students to their academic learning.

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

6. Year 10 News

Our students have had to find courage and resilience over the past couple of weeks and, as always, they haven't let us down. We are really proud of each and every one of them for committing to their learning either at home or in school.

Our top achieving students this week are: Lucy Birkett, Isabel Bush, Mia Crowe, Katie Edge, Jake Folkes, Kelsey Holman, Hannah Jordan, Erin O'Neill, Charlie Palmer and Mille Woodhouse.

Congratulations to our Year 10 leadership team. Our Head Students are: Millie Woodhouse and Toby Thompson and our Deputy Head Students are: Sade Woollard and Alfie Skerritt. Prefects will be selected next week.

Our Duke of Edinburgh scheme students have completed another trip today towards their bronze award and photography students have had a trip out today as well. It's good to be able to plan trips again.

A special mention has been given to the Year 10 history classes. Their teachers have been very impressed with how well everyone is working. Well done.

Other special mentions this week go to:

Mia Crowe and Katie Edge for being great tour guides last week at Open Evening.

Our first football fixture is Tuesday after school against Jane Austen College. Please come along and support our team.

Mr Lambert – Head of Year 10
Mrs Roe – Assistant Head of Year 10

7. Year 11 News

No update.

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 11
Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 11

8. Sixth Form News

No update.

Mrs Molloy
Head of Sixth Form

9. Careers

Virtual Live Careers event 'What Career Live? What University Live?' is happening on 12 and 13 November for all 15-19 year olds. Discover more about higher education and apprenticeship opportunities through one to one advice, free skills workshops and online talks. More information is available at: <https://vmq.6connex.eu/event/vmgevents/wcl21/login>

All students at Open Academy are able to come and talk about their career thoughts and ideas. They can pop in to S12 for a quick chat or make an appointment for a longer discussion. I have access to lots of up to date resources and can help them understand what pathway they need to take for a particular job or career.

Mrs Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

10. Library News

This week has been a fantastic week of celebration in the library. As I mentioned last week, not only have we been celebrating Libraries Week, but Thursday was also National Poetry Day. Students in Year 7 have been reading poems and collaborating on a group poem in their library lessons and we also held a Poetry Special for our Books & Biscuits club this week. Students in KS3 came together to listen to staff and other

students read some of their favourite poems, while in KS4 we gave out poems at lunchtime and students had an opportunity to visit our travelling library in the atrium.

Students who would like to try writing their own poems are encouraged to enter the Young Writers Poetry Competition. Students can enter online or collect an entry form from the library. All entries must be submitted by Friday, 22 October. [Click here for more information.](#)

Please see some of our Year 7 poems from their library lessons below. Can you guess what they are describing?

It looked like an airport building
 It's the tardis inside out
 My feelings flew round me like crows
 And vultures swooped in to feast on inhibitions
 The vultures flew as fast as planes
 And it felt like they were multiplying
 Walking into a circle, round and round
 The noise was as loud as a plane as the echo reverberated
 A puzzle how do I get in?

Co-written by Mavrick Gille, Hannah Stagg, Rodrigo Furia, Caitlin Page, Dylain Banham, Oliver North and Ms Ormosi.

It was looking at me through a camera lens

It was as big as a dragon
 staring me down
 like it was going to eat me alive

It's a factory where the work never stops
 it felt like a trap

It was an ocean
 A new world
 Like I was exploring an entirely new planet.

Co-written by Ross Brown, Alex Martin, Max Skells, Peyton White, Jayce Brighton, Alex Clarke and Ms Ling

It is like a pizza with all the different toppings,

It is like a crumpet, a doughnut,
 a stack of metallic pancakes with a cube of butter on top!

I'm scared, it's noisy,
 I feel like a mouse.

Walking inside and it feels like a forest,
 the trees clustering over me.

No

I'm ready, I'm prepared
 like an astronaut in their suit ready to take flight.

Co-written by Sasha-Mai Patrick, Jenson Lock, Riley Wilson, Reece Young, Kayden Smith-Howell and Ms Ling.

Year 7 Poems.
 Inspired by:



11. Attendance

12/13 CAN	93.26%
12 JTH	87.23%
13 LWK	77.01%
C7 KLI	92.14%
D7 MKN	96.31%
R7 CSM	93.48%
SRB 7 EOK	87.50%
I7 CHA	86.90%
C8 ABR	87.35%
D8 NWA	89.76%
I8 KMU	87.41%
R8 SNA	89.22%
SRB 8 EOK	86.49%
C9 AED	88.07%
D9 LGA	91.15%
I9 RPH	91.09%
R9 NST	88.19%
SRB 9 EOK	100.00%
C10 TTH	81.60%
D10 ATH	86.97%
I10 SMC	79.17%
R10 BLU	85.26%
SRB 10 EOK	73.33%
C11 KST	87.75%
D11 SMU	91.02%
I11 ERO	83.58%
R11 SRI	92.16%

Year 7	91.99%
Year 8	88.35%
Year 9	89.71%
Year 10	83.08%
Year 11	88.50%
Year 12	88.76%
Year 13	80.84%
Year 14	74.07%

Please see the above mentioned attendance data for the last two weeks for the period 20 September 2021 to 1 October 2021 inclusive. Well done to the winning tutor group/s from each year group and SRB, who will be awarded the attendance trophy.

For the month of September 2021, we had an amazing 238 students from Years 7-11 and 13 students from our 6th Form achieving 100%. Well done all! These students will all be given achievement points.



We have had two students leave the Academy recently – Denisa Purice, Year 7, who has transferred to Ormiston Victory Academy and Elisha Jones, Year 9, who has transferred to Sprowston Community High Academy. We wish them both well.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

12. Wellbeing

Today is #helloyellow, a fundraising day for Young Minds which is a charity to support young people's mental health. As part of this they have created a 'parents survival guide' <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/survival-guide/> which offers ways in which parents can support children through those occasional 'hard work' times!

Mrs Wicks
Teacher

13. Chaplain's Reflection

I came across this poem last week by Helen Steiner Rice and it has been a big encouragement to me so I thought I would share it with you:

When the "storms of life"
Gather darkly ahead,
I think these wonderful words
I once read ...

And I say to myself
As threatening clouds hover,
"Don't fold up your wings
And run for cover."

But like the eagle,
Spread wide your wings
And soar far above
The troubles life brings.

For the eagle knows
That the higher he flies,
The more tranquil and brighter
Become the skies.

And there is nothing in life
We were ever asked to bear
That we can't soar above
On the wings of a prayer.

And in looking back over
The storm you passed through,
You'll find you gained strength
And new courage, too.

For in facing life's storms
With an eagle's wings,
You can fly far above
Earth's small, petty things.


The above poem is called Storms Bring Out Eagles and it encourages us that even in the bad times when things are stormy around us, that we can still soar in life. So whatever storm comes along this week, it's to bring out the eagle in you. When others are running for cover, you will soar.

The Bible encourages us with this and it says “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint”. God is only a prayer away.

Have a great rest of your week.

God bless.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain



The
BIG BIKE
Revival

Come to our
Fix Ya Bike Cafe
Tuesday evenings from
October 5th 6.30 – 8.30pm

A free bicycle workshop with a cafe at
Nextdoor@St Francis Church on Rider Haggard Road

where you can get your bike fixed by Awesome Sean
our expert mechanic, or fix it yourself

Under sixteens must be accompanied by an adult

These sessions are held on a first come first served basis,
but why not pop in for a coffee and have a look!

Contact fathertracy@mail.com
for more details