

Open Academy Update 13 November 2020
For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child!

Dear Parents/Carers

I'll start with another **thank you for all you continue to do to help us keep the community safe**. As you will be aware from our recent communications, we have had a couple of isolated cases of COVID within the academy and we have a number of students in two different year groups currently at home self-isolating as a precautionary step.

The advice remains the same as before in terms of symptoms – **If your child develops symptoms of COVID – temperature / new frequent cough / loss of taste and or smell, please keep them at home until you can get them tested**. Please do let us know that you are doing that and any result as you get it.

Please see the attached letter which clearly describes exactly what we are doing and why. A summary is that if we are made aware of a positive test result for either a staff member or student, we identify all the potential close contacts of that person, child or adult, and ask them to self-isolate for the next 14 days. If they do not develop symptoms that is all that is required, the household go about their business and monitor their child. If the child goes on to develop symptoms, then the parent will need to take them for a test and the household will need to isolate and take further advice once they get the result.

So far, we have tried to contact affected students personally, either via a phone call from myself or another member of staff. As you will appreciate this will become trickier as we have more cases to deal with, so it may be that our communication may need to switch to email in the first instance, however we will still try to contact affected individuals as and when we can. **Please note - from now on, if a whole year group is affected, we will put a message on the website as well as sending an email.**

Please try to remind your child that self-isolation is not illness! Even though students are at home, we are very keen that they understand we expect them to do everything they can to keep up with their schoolwork – we are working hard to catch up from the first lockdown, so it makes sense to keep up now.

So, at the moment, whilst students in Year 8 (all) and Year 10 (around 40) are self-isolating, we are trying our best to ensure there is plenty of work to be completed. At first there is generic work available through TEAMS as per the school timetable. As we become used to this situation, our aim will be that as well as the work being set, your teachers will try to be available to answer questions online for at least some time in each of your lessons to help you get the work completed. This will be more frequent for Year 8 than Year 10, however some staff will be attempting live lessons and blended lessons, with some at home and some in lessons. Please bear with us while we keep trying in difficult circumstances.

We are asking therefore that you encourage your child to be up and ready for virtual school, just as they would if coming into the academy for the school day. They must check every period for work and complete all activities set to the best of their abilities. In Year 8 if they seem to have done all set work, there is the knowledge organiser with a range of activities to get on with too.

I hope the lockdown is not bringing too much of a challenge to you all, but if you are struggling, we may be able to offer some support with a few basics, so please do get in touch via your child's Assistant Head of Year.

Jon Ford
Principal

Contents:

1. Academic Mentors
2. Year 7 News
3. Year 8 News
4. Year 9 News
5. Year 10 News
6. Year 11 News
7. 6th Form News
8. Careers
9. Year 13 Personal Statements
10. Library News
11. Attendance
12. Chaplain's Reflection

1. Academic Mentors

We have been lucky to secure funding for some young academic mentors to work with Year 7s until Christmas. They are separated into 3 cohorts. The online GL assessment tests that the students did last half term determined what cohort each student was in. We will be continuing the testing over the course of this half term. The tests cannot be revised for as they measure potential and progress over time rather than knowledge. The sessions are not optional:

1. Those who have significant gaps in their Year 5 and 6 learning are in small groups to try to boost the students up to the age related expectation. An example might be where a student has not mastered times tables or has a below average breadth of vocabulary. Those with similar scores are in the same groups. Different groups will be taken out of the odd lesson here and there to boost these core skills that underpin the whole of the national curriculum at Key Stage 3.
2. Students who are at Age Related Expectation and could benefit from extending their knowledge and understanding of key skills in a more challenging context. Primary schools really do well developing these skills, but lockdown did seem to interrupt that support for some students. A programme is being developed to run in Hub sessions after school. They will take place in a classroom between 3 and 4pm. Most evenings we have 20% of the school doing extra sessions and I know many of the parents were asking when is it Year 7s turn to benefit. The students involved at first will be given new timetables with the slots on next week.
3. Those students who exceeded expectation in their assessment will be given the opportunity in small groups to do a project with mentors. This project will end with creating a product that demonstrates high order thinking and writing skills. This will take place during the school day this half term.

Mr Ward
Vice Principal

2. Year 7 News

A fantastic week all round for Year 7s, with plenty of achievement points and general behaviour has been good. Every student should be clear of the safety precautions around the building, expectations in the classroom and at social time. We would like to say a big well done and thank you for what everyone has done and continue to do. We are super proud of the year group who have showed resilience and understanding in the current circumstances.

The top achievers this week are:

Yousif Al-Saddon
Faral Alwi
Ruby Anderson
Jasmine Attwater
Tyler Bailey

Chelsea Bale
Kayne Banham
Riley Benfield
Oscar-Jay Birchenall
Ellie Blake

Well done to Mr Walters' tutor group D7 who have the most achievement points this week.

We are excited to have extra support for some of our Year 7 students for Maths and English from a company called YipiYap. They are being taught in small groups to improve their knowledge. This is an amazing opportunity for our students and we thank Mr Ward, our Vice Principal, for the hard work in securing this support for the students.

Following the recent requirement for students to wear face coverings we are pleased that the majority of students are wearing them. We have a small number of students who are exempt. We have had to provide some students with some facemasks due to them losing them or getting broken. If possible, can students bring a spare one just in case this happens

We are starting to collect for the Christmas Hampers, all tutor groups have a list of items that can be bought in, if families/students are able to contribute. This is a yearly event and is an amazing way to support the local community.

The results of the postcard competition will be announced early next week.

In the lead up to Christmas the year team is planning a few activities so watch this space for more details soon.

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

3. Year 8 News

As we go into our second week of self-isolating, we would like to remind all students and parents that normal timetables are up and running on Microsoft Teams with a mixture of virtual live lessons and assignments. The expectation is that all students, where possible, are attending and completing these lessons. Those students who have access to the work, but are not engaging, will naturally be asked to attend Hub sessions on our return, to catch up on any work missed, so please strongly encourage your children to continue with their education whilst at home – Xboxes and PlayStations are an easy, but unnecessary distraction during school hours!

We have also reached out to those families eligible for free school meals with a food care package provided by Morrisons during the isolation period. If your circumstances have changed at all, please do get in contact with us and we can add more names to the list.

Finally, just to say that we are looking forward to Year 8's return on the 23 or 24 November, depending on when your child was asked to self-isolate, and hope that everyone is looking after themselves both mentally and physically.

Well done everyone for what has been a difficult week. Many of you have been joining in with the live lessons and this has been fantastic to see, as they are there to give you extra support with your learning. Keep it up! We know that you must be missing each other socially and this is understandable, so just as a reminder that having social chats can take place in the Year 8 break time channel, but should not take place at the end of a live lesson as they may be recorded. This is the safest place for you to do it - at break and lunch.

Miss Lines – Head of Year 8
Ms Moss and Mrs Smith – Assistant Heads of Year 8

4. Year 9 News

Our attitude this week has been 'keep calm and carry on' and that's what we have all done brilliantly.

Our top achieving students this week are:

Jude Abramson, Nathan Freeman, Freya Graysmark, Isaac Newrick, Dalia Rosca, Hannah Jordan, Toby Thompson, Kimora Alexander, Klaudia Baranowicz, Paige Berry, Hayden Cobbett, George Colledge, Kelsey Holman, Jonas Kieras, Charlie Palmer and Mason Perriton. Well done to you all.

We have new prefects to add to our team:

Torri Ashton, Owen Middleton, James Hoyer, Kasia Jolly, Hannah Jordan and Josh Humphrey. We look forward to working with you all and we have updated our rota.

Please make sure your child has a face mask as we have had a few who have forgotten theirs, or their mask has broken. If anyone has any masks they would like to donate we would really appreciate that as a school.

Year 9s have been given the opportunity to take part in a Youth Sports Trust project, this will entail:

- Opportunity to become a sports leader and take part in clubs after school.
- The goal is for students to lead/support games in PE lessons and after school.
- Firstly we will be looking at a new sport called Kin-Ball.
- We already had 6 names before summer holidays that were interested.

Come and see Mr Lambert if you are interested.

Mr Lambert - Head of Year 9

Mrs Roe - Assistant Head of Year 9

5. Year 10 News

No update.

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 10

Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 10

6. Year 11 News

No update.

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 11

Mrs Middleton – Assistant Head of Year 11

7. Sixth Form News

Christmas decorations

Whilst we are happy if students would like to decorate the 6th Form areas, there are a couple of things to consider please:

- All electrical items (lights etc) MUST be PAT tested before they can be plugged in. If there is not a PAT tested sticker on the plug, that means they are not safe to use yet. Students can ask the site team located on the ground floor under the stairs to PAT test.
- Any decorations put up must be appropriate!
- Please remember that it is students' responsibility to keep the 6th Form areas neat and tidy.

Use of masks

6th Formers need to wear masks/visors in communal areas, whilst also maintaining at least 1 metres social distance from one another. They can of course take these off to eat and drink. Whilst I realise that a number of students do not agree with the use of masks within the communal areas, I need to remind everyone again that masks are in use to protect every single one of us. If students struggle to use a mask all day, feel free to switch it up by wearing visors some of the time. These can be purchased really cheaply from Amazon.

I know that at times it is really hard to not feel fed up and feel that these rules are in fact unfair. But please, please hold on to the fact that this will not last forever. And on speaking with people who have had Covid, I know that they would happily go through the pain of having to wear PPE all day long over ever having to go through that illness again. Please remember that we all have days where we are feeling a bit low, and I am always here if students need a chat. I'm a great listener, plus I have an endless supply of biscuits!

UCAS day 19 November

All Year 13 will be off timetable for the day on this day and will be based in the football block all day. During this day we will hopefully complete, or be well on our way to completing UCAS applications. We will have a number of people from UEA who will be virtually supporting you all. If students have any questions, please can you email them to Lucy our NEACO champion on L.Reynolds-Mckay@uea.ac.uk so that she can answer these.

Mrs Molloy
Head of 6th Form

8. Careers

As we continue to be restricted by the Covid19 pandemic and real-life careers activities are at the moment on hold, it is really important that students are encouraged to use our careers platform Unifrog. This is now available to all students from Year 9 upwards and many students have already signed up and started creating their own profiles. It is really easy to access on www.unifrog.org and has masses of academic subject information for students to use as well as guidance on careers, courses and further/higher education institutions. Students can create their own accounts and save useful items and videos which interest them. They can create shortlists, log work experience, record interests and activities and build up their own CVs using Unifrog's CV builder. It's a great way to get a head start and boost confidence! For further information on *any* aspect of using Unifrog please see me in S12.

Our Sector of the Month for November is Energy. This is a really exciting sector for our region with Norfolk & Suffolk leading the way in delivering sustainable and low carbon energy solutions which underpins economic growth across the UK. The Southern North Sea currently plays host to over 150 offshore gas assets, together with 986 offshore wind turbines generating 3.75GW of renewable power directly off the region's coast, with an additional 1,000+ turbines generating some 14GW of offshore wind power to be installed over the next decade. The Energy sector has a current workforce of 7,800 and 400 enterprises and is projected to expand rapidly over the next decades as the UK moves towards a zero carbon footprint. The following link contains lots of real-life video clips of people who work in this sector and is a great way for students and families to find out more about the fantastic opportunities for employment:

<https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/energy-7/videos/>

For those of you who are more creatively inclined and interested in working in the Arts. please find below an exciting opportunity for young people which is taking place at the end of this month, overseen and organised by Young Norfolk Arts. Running from 23-28 November, Your future, your voice! Engage Works is an online programme for young people exploring creative career pathways and activism. It has been coordinated by Young Norfolk Arts in partnership with the Norwich 2040 Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP), and support from Festival Bridge and Norwich University of the Arts. It is open to young people from across Norfolk and offers a programme of free creative workshops, creative careers advice, webinars and resources. Find out more and register online at:

youngnorfolkarts.org.uk/engageworks

If you have any queries, please contact YNA directly: enquiries@youngnorfolkarts.org

Mrs Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

9. Year 13 Personal Statements

If you have a young person in Year 13 who is considering applying to university, you may have heard lots about personal statements. Students wishing to attend university must apply via UCAS (a centralised system). Schools have set a deadline in December for applications to be completed.

A big part of this application is your young person's personal statement. This is a short piece of writing by them to explain their reasons for wanting to study their chosen course and why they are a strong candidate for the course. Students have a limited amount they are able to write – 47 lines or 4000 characters (including spaces, punctuation etc), whichever comes first.

We suggest that when writing a personal statement, your young person includes:

- An introduction to explain why they are interested in studying the course
- Academic experience (showing they have the knowledge and skills to complete the course)
- Super curricular (subject activity outside of school, for example reading articles or completing an online taster session)
- Extra curricular (hobbies and interests)
- Conclusion

We would suggest your young person focuses 70-80% of their statement on their course choice and subject related experience. One model for your young person when writing is an A, B, C model:

- A for activity – explaining relevant activity they have completed
- B for benefit – what did they learn, what skills did they develop?
- C for course – linking back to the course

If your young person has any questions, I will be in virtual attendance on 19 November while Year 13 write and edit their personal statements. I am more than happy to answer any questions you may have and can be contacted via Ms Davies.

Lucy Reynolds-McKay
Higher Education Champion, NEACO

10. Library News & Updates

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

Creative Writing Club
Year 7: Tuesday 3-4pm
Year 8/9: Thursday 3-4pm

Through a series of workshops, with activities created by authors themselves, develop your writing skills and become a master storyteller. We will look at different forms of writing and in each session you will have a chance to create your own piece of writing and receive feedback on it. This club is all about creativity and writing for fun. Whether you already have an idea that you've been waiting to tell, or you don't know where to start, come along and let your imagination free!

Manga Club

Year 10 and 11: Wednesday 3-4pm

If your child would like to attend either of these clubs, we ask that they please sign up in advance. [Please click here to sign up.](#)

Students who are isolating at home are welcome and encouraged to attend virtually. Please sign up as usual using the form attached and a link to an online meeting will be sent to your child.

Reading Books

Students must have a reading book with them every day as part of their school equipment. Students are welcome to bring in books from home or borrow books from the school library. While students are unable to come into the school library to browse books at this time, we are offering a digital click and collect reservation system that allows students to continue to borrow library books. Students log into the school library website with their school email address: <https://u007886.microlibrarian.net> Passwords were emailed to students earlier in the year; if students are unsure of their password, they can contact me.

Instructions on how to use the click and collect system can be found below and attached. If your child is struggling to access the website or needs help reserving a book, please contact me and I can offer further support. Students without IT access at home can also collect a paper book request form from the library or their tutor.

LIBRARY CLICK AND COLLECT

FINDING A BOOK

Scan me for a full user guide.



1

Highlighted books (i.e. new books, most popular books and the latest returns) are displayed on the home page.

2

Use 'Reading List' to search through booklists for different genres (i.e. funny books, horror books, mystery books ect.)

3

Use the search bar to look for specific authors, book titles or informational books.

4

When you have found a book you like, click on the cover or title to open it.

REQUESTING A BOOK

1

Under the books cover, check the green bubble to see if the book is available (this tells you if there is a copy in the library (1 or higher) or if someone else has borrowed it already (0)).

2

Click the green reserve button to request your book.

3

Click 'reserve at school' to confirm your reservation.

4

Miss Ling will deliver your book in tutor the next day.

Miss Ling
Librarian

11. Attendance



Well done to Year Group 8 and to tutor groups 1213CANGGO, I9BLU, SRB7EOK and SRB8EOK for having the highest attendance for week ending 6 November 2020. Well done all!

Attendance Lottery – Due to the Year 8 and some of Year 10 students self-isolating for the next couple of weeks, the lottery will be put on hold until they return to school.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

12. Chaplain's Reflection

Aspiration

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe".

Anatole France

This week, I want to encourage you to look forward to the future. This pandemic we are going through will try to rob us of hope, our dreams and aspirations. We have so much to cope with at the moment and our lives can be so full of just managing. I recently saw this quote by Anatole France and it is an inspiration. "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe."

At this time, it may be difficult to act, but we can still dream, plan and believe for a great future for our lives and loved ones. Look forward to those things you can do when this all goes away. Don't let this pandemic push you down.

In closing, God encourages us with these words found in the Bible. "For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Allow yourself to dream and look to the future with hope.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers. God bless.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain