

Open Academy Update 19 November 2021

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

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

Welcome to our newsletter this week and what a week it has been. Although conducted in a very strict COVID controlled, all seated, all ticketed and highly ventilated (pretty chilly) fashion, we did actually manage to put on our 'Open's Got Talent' talent competition, which was a fantastic evening of entertainment (and a good test event for the Carol Concert – coming up on Thursday, 9 December at 6.30pm).

It has been so frustrating trying to work around the pandemic in terms of performances and even now, the new advice is that we must once again revert to online parents' evenings. We were able to deliver Open's Got Talent after strict controls were introduced and a tight risk assessment completed, which will be tweaked and tightened a little more for the Carol Concert. Again, we are being allowed to do this as long as our case numbers remain low and we update and finalise the risk assessment just before the event.

It was well worth the risk assessment for Open's Got Talent though, as we were treated to 10 fantastic acts of signing dancing, music and Rubik's cubing (?!?). Miss Lines did a fantastic job of preparing and supporting the acts and bringing the evening together, and lots of staff and students gave their time to help set up, prepare and support. I was privileged to be asked to judge along with Miss Reed and Miss Ormosi and we had the impossible job of picking a judge's winner. The audience too got to pick their 'people's choice' winner and with such tough choices after such great performances, the voting was very close. The singing, guitar playing Lucy won the judges award, narrowly beating Rea who choreographed and danced her way through a fantastic performance. Dahlia and Toby were chosen as the people's choice winners, but it is fair to say that the biggest winners on the night were the audience who had a marvellous time. The supportive and encouraging atmosphere meant it was fine to have a go and many more of the acts will be off polishing their performances for next year!

That of course will be COVID permitting, and on that theme I would once again like to thank you for your careful and supportive approach to the community. The vast majority of you continue the twice weekly lateral flow tests and if there is a positive test you let us know and keep your child home for a PCR. In this way we are managing to keep our numbers incredibly low – at one point this week we had only 1 case isolating. So, your continued efforts are most appreciated.

We are still hoping to take the Year 7 students over to St Francis Church on the last day of term for a 'lessons and carols' service to get them in the swing of things. Given the size of the church and the COVID risk, we had hoped to invite parents too, but that will not be possible this year. On the plus side however, we believe we do have a robust risk assessment enough to ensure we can run our carol concert. Inevitably it will have to be an all ticket event and there will be COVID restrictions which we will publish right before the event – just as we did for the Open's Got Talent event. However, please do book tickets and come along. For many people it is the most 'Christmassy' thing they do and it does kick off the festive season so well.

Oh, and while I'm at it, Mark would not forgive me if I didn't mention donations for the Christmas hampers. Your child should have received a list of what we are collecting, it is very specific goods to make a Christmas dinner as opposed to general tinned goods, which we struggle to use.

I shall stop there and hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter as you enjoy Children in Need this year. There is a very relaxed atmosphere in the Academy today in non-uniform for Pudsey, and I am delighted to see so many students supporting our anti-bullying drive by wearing odd socks today. Students leaders attended an anti-bullying conference with Mr Wilkinson yesterday and you should get a chance to read all about that shortly and what else we will be doing to challenge bullying in the school, for now, have a great week.

Jon Ford
Principal

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1. Anti-Bullying Week

We have been busy this week working with students on various fronts supporting the National Anti-Bullying Week. Members of the full Student Council attended an anti-bullying conference led by Norfolk Youth Board that included keynote speakers and workshops.

Teachers have been highlighting issues in lesson and during tutor time. By the time you read this you may be missing the odd sock as today we have supported the national campaign of wearing an odd sock to raise awareness of bullying.

Mr Wilkinson
Assistant Principal

2. Year 7 News

Football

Many congratulations to the boys who played in the football tournament at the Open Academy on Tuesday. Both teams played well, the A Team not conceding a game and the B team only lost two games out of 5. We are very proud, not only of their achievements, but how they conducted themselves on and off the pitch whilst representing the Academy.

Banned Items

Students should NOT be bringing gum or fizzy drinks (especially energy drinks) into the Academy. These items will be confiscated.

Name Calling

This week Mrs Middleton and I have had to deal with a number of issues involving name calling, which has been very upsetting for some students. Please remind your child about the importance of being kind. We would also encourage any student who is upset by another student to speak to their class teacher, tutor or Mrs Middleton and myself. We are in the best place to quickly investigate incidents, speak to all students involved and implement sanctions where appropriate. Whilst we very much encourage students to tell parents about their day at school and things that are worrying them when they get home, it is not always helpful for parents to receive a call at lunchtime when students are upset and a parent may not be in a position to help. We also need time to investigate incidents, there is usually more than one side to every story. If you have any concerns please contact the Academy either by phone or email. If you wish to have a meeting with your child's tutor, Mrs Middleton or myself, please phone the Academy to make an appointment.

Open's Got Talent

We could not be more proud of the students who participated in Open Voice. I am in admiration of the courage that they have shown to stand up and perform in front of others. Well done to Ada who beat Mr

Knight in 3x3 and pyramid Rubik cube challenge and thank you to Leila for timing. Great performances from Lacey singing Human, by Christina Perri and Mae singing All I Want by Olivia Rodrigo, and an especially big well done to Ria, whose dance earned her 2nd place in the judges choice.

Shout Outs

Our top students for achievement points this week:

Evie Timber, Ada Anil, Dylain Banham, Zena Ali, Reece Young and Rodrigo Furia

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 7

Mrs Middleton – Assistant Head of Year 7

3. Year 8 News

Wow!! How are we only four weeks away until we break up for Christmas! Students are working hard and have really settled into the life of Year 8. They are starting to adjust well to sharing their lunchtime with Year 9, after having almost a year of it being just them! One thing that we would like to remind students of, is that during lunchtime, students need to be sat down in the lecture theatre or outside. Students should not be walking around the Academy. This is because there are lessons taking place due to the split lunches and we are doing our best to avoid the learning of others being disrupted.

Year 8 are still top of the leaders board for achievement points. We are now over 14,500 achievement points, which is fantastic. Keep up the hard work. There will be trips coming up for students who have achieved the most LEARNT points, the best homework and made the most improvements in a range of areas.

The average Rubrics score which has been given to Year 8 so far is between a 3-4. This is what students should be aiming to achieve for each piece of homework. I spoke to a couple of parents this week, who were unsure what to look for when homework had been returned to students. You are looking for a score of 1-4. Rubrics score 1 means that homework wasn't submitted or that it showed very little or no understanding, 2 means students showed little understanding on the topic/homework set, 3 and 4 shows that student have shown good (3) or excellent (4) understanding. We encourage students to take the correct time on their homework so that they can achieve 3s and 4s on the Rubrics. If you are ever unsure, please don't hesitate to contact us as we would be happy to talk you through it.

A reminder that if your child has HUB on their timetable they should be attending. This is a supportive session, and is there to help students complete homework to a high standard.

Shout outs:

Miss Whitwood was super impressed this week, when she watched the final Year 8 boys dance performances. Well done to everyone.

Well done to the Year 8 boys who have been attending football training and representing the Open Academy in fixtures.

Miss Cheung shout out for Tyler Hanwell and Lily Blyth for their efforts in Maths.

Once again Year 8, well done for a great half term so far. Let's keep up the hard work.

Ms Whitwood and Mr Crawford - Heads of Year 8

Mrs Lamb - Assistant Head of Year 8

4. Year 9 News

Heading into the last week of November and autumn and the weather is still remaining settled and fairly warm. We have just 21 more days in school before we break up for the Christmas holidays and to mark the

end to the third week we are raising money for Children in Need, wearing non-school uniform and potentially odd socks. A fantastic way to end the week.

There is still a great growing flurry of achievement points this half term which shows the fantastic ability, behaviour and zeal of our students. The current tally for this week is:

AED – 82
LGA – 125 (an increase of 19 from the previous week)
RPH – 95 (an increase of 22 from the previous week)
NST – 119 (an increase of 30 from the previous week)

Fantastic effort.

Weekly late detentions are going in the right direction this week. Thank you for having supportive conversations at home, they definitely make a difference to our learners. This week there has been a reduction of 256 minutes across the year group. We will now be informing parents/carers if their child is staying for an after-school detention on Friday, hopefully this improved communication will see further reductions in lost learning next week.

It is starting to feel cold in the academy due to the necessity to ventilate classrooms. We want to concentrate of students learning and enjoying school and want to remind them to wear the correct uniform. Please encourage students to wear an extra layer under their school shirts. Hoodies are not allowed in school. Please wear a school jumper and a coat. You can purchase school jumpers from school from Mrs Rose in the school office at a cost of £14 and £17 each (sleeveless are £11 and £13), which they can wear under their blazer throughout the day. Please contact us if there are any problems with this.

The improvement in students' appearances/uniform in this last week has been noticed and is a great improvement since the start of this half term. Again, thank you for your support in this as it is obviously working.

Thank you for your support at home and I hope we can continue to make progress as a year group as we head towards the winter break.

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

5. Rhine Valley Trip

An information letter has been emailed to all Year 8 and 9 parents/carers regarding the upcoming trip to the Rhine Valley, Germany next July. A copy of this letter will also be given to students next week. If you have any queries, please contact me sam.mcevoy@open-academy.org.uk

Mrs McEvoy
MFL Teacher

6. Year 10 News

We have had a very positive week in school. The anti-bullying and BLM committees have had meetings, Open's Got Talent took place, and non-school uniform/odd socks day today in support of Children in Need.

Open's Got Talent took place on Wednesday and huge congratulations to Lucy Birkett for winning the judges' vote and Dalia Rosca and Toby Cane for winning the audience vote. We have very talented students in Year 10. Congratulations to Lucy, Dalia and Toby and to all who were brave enough to take part.

The following students have achieved the most achievement points this week:

Toby Cane, Isla Gardner, Kasia Jolly, Lisa Kracewicz, Samih Ozkan, Joe Sanderson, Charlie Slack, Daniel Smajda, Sade Woollard, Jamil Ali, Atanas Kyurkchiev, Jayden Muzembe, Connor Patrick, Toby Thompson and Ahmed Tsinev. Well done to you all.

Our football team have a fixture at home next Thursday, 25 November after school against Sprowston – please come along and support if you can.

Uniform and punctuality are really good at the moment – thank you for your support with this. Please continue to encourage your child to complete their homework to a good standard and attend hub if they are required to.

Have a great weekend everyone.

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

7. Madrid Trip

We are pleased to announce our trip to Madrid will be taking place in September 2022. All Year 10 students are invited to take part - look out for my email next week.

Ms Stickland
Teacher – Head of Academic Faculty

8. Year 11 News

I'd like to start this newsletter by saying how impressed I have been this week with the students' mature attitude towards their exams. These exams are a great way for teachers to assess how the students are doing and also a valuable experience for the students to experience and practise what being in a GCSE exam feels like. If any student has found these a stressful experience please ask them to come and see either myself or Mrs Roberts for support.

As the weather gets cooler and the continued extra ventilation is happening due to COVID, can I remind parents that hoodies are not permitted in school. If your child is worried about becoming cold in classrooms, then please ensure they wear a white t-shirt under their school shirt, have their blazer on and school jumpers are available to buy too if needs be.

I have a few special 'shouts outs' for students who have gone above and beyond for the academy over the last few weeks. They have given up their time to help at our awards evening and Open's Got Talent. Many thanks to: Mackenzie Culley, Jess Ramm, Brandon Alden, Ella Ash, Izzy Taylor, Jess Druce and Jess Wicks.

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

9. Sixth Form News

Thank you so much to those students that attended assembly on Monday. I'm still receiving requests regarding working from home during private study sessions. Students should not be too disheartened if I haven't authorised it this half term. I have explained to each student individually why their request has or has not been authorised, so please try and take that on board for next half term.

UCAS

Another gentle reminder that UCAS deadline is FRIDAY, 3 DECEMBER. Students' personal statement drafts should be with me ASAP. Again, students should remember that Alex is based in my office in school every Tuesday and Thursday and they can book a session with him by speaking with Ms Davies.



Head People

I would like to welcome our new Head People into Year 12. Massive virtual round of applause for Shadrak and Rosario! Well done boys!



NCS

I am so excited to hear about some of the students' ideas for their Social Action Projects. They sound absolutely amazing and I'm looking forward to watching the ideas evolve into actual events over the next few weeks.

Looking forward to these boys having a newly polished gym to workout in!

10. Careers

Year 10 work experience will return in 2022 after a two year break due to the impact of the pandemic. It will take place the same week as Year 7 camp, Monday, 4 July to Friday, 8 July. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to engage with the 'world of work' and gain valuable experience for their future applications and in past years has been very successful. Families should now have received a letter and guide explaining the process and next week students will be issued with a 'Self-Placement' form to work through in their Skills for Life lessons. I will work with the Year 10 team to coordinate all administration and arrange all Health and Safety checks with Norfolk County Council. If you have any questions, please contact me caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk

Our Sector of the Month for November is Ports and Maritime - please encourage your young people to explore the exciting opportunities each month. In East Anglia this is a significant industry with Felixstowe being the largest container port in the UK and Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth and Ipswich also part of the global shipping industry. By 2030 the sector is expected to double in size and offer an even wider range of

career and job opportunities in this country and overseas. An Introduction to the variety of roles can be found at:

<https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/ports-maritime-61/>

Other useful sites are:

<https://www.maritimeuk.org/careers/> and <https://careersatsea.org/>

The NHS has released a fantastic set of resources and competitions highlighting the wide range of careers available in the medical and healthcare sector. The link can be found at:

https://www.stepintohenhs.nhs.uk/secondary-schools?utm_source=Nov+email+Secondary+SLT&utm_medium=Nov+email+Secondary+SLT&utm_campaign=Nov+email+Secondary+SLT+CTA+1&utm_id=Nov+email+Secondary+SLT&dm_i=5EPN,GBUC,3DW,NND,1WKAR,1

Mrs Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

11. Library News

Manga & Comics Club will be hosting our next movie afternoon after school on Tuesday, 30 November. We will be watching the Studio Ghibli classic *Spirited Away* (rated PG). All students are welcome to attend. This film has a 2 hour run time, so attending students will be leaving school later than usual.

If your child would like to attend, please fill out the form below or collect a letter from the library. Consent form: <https://forms.office.com/r/XWxKh4t66s>

Miss Ling
Librarian

12. Attendance

Congratulations to the 148 students who have improved their attendance between the months of September 2021 and October 2021. They have all been given achievement points.

Being in school on time is very important and students should be with their year group to then go into their tutor group for 8.40am. If students arrive after this time, they will need to sign in the late book in reception. In addition, if they arrive after 9.05am, they will be coded with an unauthorised absence, which ultimately effects their attendance.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

13. Chaplain's News and Reflection

Our Open Academy Christmas carol concert will be taking place on Thursday, 9 December at 6.30pm so we would warmly invite you to come along for some seasonal cheer. It's going to be a great night of carols, performances and festive treats.

Please note that this is a pre-bookable event as we want to keep as COVID safe as possible. Please let me know by email mark.pimlott@open-academy.org.uk that you are coming, and a table will be reserved for you.



This year we are giving out Christmas Hampers as random acts of kindness to our community again. Students are aware of this in school, but we would appreciate your support too. Below is an item list of goods that can be donated for the hampers, so please feel free to send items into the academy with your child.

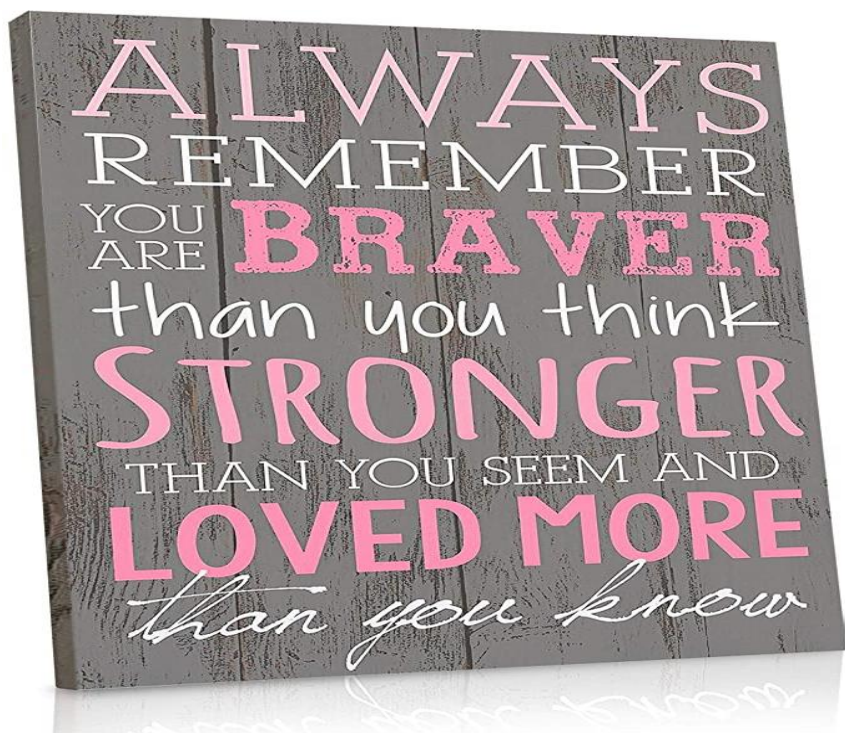
Please note, is very important that we stick to the hamper list. Perishable good vouchers can be given as well as donations. Thank you so much in advance for your generosity.

Christmas Hampers

List 2021

- Perishable Food Vouchers
- Stuffing
- Shloer/Red or White
- Custard
- Savoury Snacks
- Tin Of Chocolates
- Biscuit/Shortbread Tin/
Packets
- Christmas Crackers
- Christmas Cake
- Christmas Pudding
- Mince Pies
- Cranberry Sauce
- Gravy Granules
- Crisps
- Tinned fruit/Peas/Potatoes





God bless you.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain