

Open Academy Update 26 November 2021
For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child.

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

Dear all, welcome to this week's newsletter.

As the weather finally gets the hang of the fact that it is winter, our ventilation approach is really noticeable now. Please do encourage your child to wear a base layer/something under their academy shirt. We have sold lots of jumpers recently, which is great and we are trying very hard to maintain uniform standards despite the challenge. We also encourage students to have a coat that fits over their blazer if they need another layer, although the vast majority have things worked out very well and uniform on the whole has never been better, we just need to take the extra layer step as things take a turn for the cold.

Speaking of the winter, it at least brings round the best time of the year – Christmas. Please see the attached leaflet from the local authority for information regarding Christmas holiday activities for young people from 4-16 – all free if you have free school meals – or for a basic minimum if not (although if cost is a problem please do contact the organisers as they may have funds to support). I think this is the first time there are holiday club activities at this time of year, so do have a look in case there is something your child may enjoy.

I am hoping many of you will enjoy the Christmas Carol Concert with us on the 9 December. We will have to restrict numbers due to COVID safety, so please do get your tickets booked soon. It is a great way to get into the festive spirit. Another way we will be getting into the festive spirit will be by taking Year 7 over to St Francis – our local parish Church on Friday, 17 December for a traditional lessons and carols service. We hope this will become a new tradition at the academy and I am looking forward to getting Christmas off to a great start for Year 7 with Rev Janet Wyer.

The academy will close to students (not staff) at 12.30 on the last day of term and, as usual, we ask that students do not go to the KFC across the road as they are not allowed to serve students in uniform, except where accompanied by a parent or guardian/carer.

In other news, Mr Thompson has been sharing some of our lockdown methods with the international educational community as part of the Microsoft Showcase Schools initiative. Not only are we one of only 50 schools in the country to have achieved this accolade this year, even fewer were selected to present at the recent international conference. Just a shame it was virtual for Mr Thompson, as I'm sure he would have enjoyed being there in person in the USA!

Finally, this week, can I thank all the parents who have recently taken the time to email in positive thoughts and praise for staff and for events at the academy and all the Year 8 parents who completed the parent survey at parents evening. It is really great to get your views as often people are only moved to feedback when there is an issue, so your encouragement is deeply appreciated.

With so much else going on I will stop there and let you get on with the rest of the newsletter. Don't forget to check out the holiday activities on the attached leaflet from the local authority.

Jon Ford
Principal

Contents:

1. Vaccine Update
2. Cashless Academy
3. Sanitary Products
4. PE
5. Year 7 News
6. Year 8 News
7. Year 9 News
8. Design & Technology
9. Germany - Rhine Valley Trip
10. Year 10 News
11. Year 11 News
12. Sixth Form News
13. Careers
14. Library News
15. Attendance
16. Chaplain's Reflection

1. Vaccine Update

Please see the attached NHS vaccine advice letter.

Mrs Rose
Senior Administrator

2. Cashless Academy

A reminder that we are no longer able to accept cash payments in school. We have had a few incidents recently where students have brought a small amount of cash into school to purchase lunch, please ensure your child has their lunch account topped up online in advance. If you have been unable to access the online payments +Pay please contact the finance office for assistance – finance@open-academy.org.uk

Mrs Appleby
Business Manager

3. Sanitary Products

The government provides the academy with a supply of sanitary products to be distributed to students who need them. Students can ask for them from their year office or GO5. If students are uncomfortable to ask a member of staff, parents are welcome to request a supply and arrange collection - please email office@open-academy.org.uk

Mrs Appleby
Business Manager

4. PE

As the weather gets wet and much colder in the coming months, we want to remind you that students are allowed to wrap up in PE lessons. Students are permitted to wear black tracksuit bottoms, black or dark jumpers/jackets and when necessary, a coat. Please be reminded that coats are at the discretion of the teacher based on the activity being completed.

This also applies to students who are unable to or have a medical need which means they are unable to participate in lessons. It is important to keep warm and avoid getting uniform wet, therefore we expect students to change regardless of their ability to participate.

This is to prevent students being in wet and cold uniform for the rest of the day.

Mr Richardson
Teacher

5. Year 7 News

As part of their NCS programme the Year 12 students are organising a Year 7 school disco. This is likely to take place on Friday, 10 December 5-7pm, but we will confirm this next week.

Please can we have items brought in for the Christmas hampers. These will go to deserving households in the community.

If your child is having problems with completing homework, please encourage them to email their teacher to ask for help. All homework must be completed and even if students are attending Hub, they should still be attempting work at home. One hour at Hub isn't enough to complete current work set and catch up on work missed. Often having a routine time to complete work can help students. For example, an hour Monday, Wednesday and Thursday after tea. When this routine is established and becomes an expectation this will be easier for students to accept. I suggest this to you from personal experience with my own children.

Completion of homework is essential to help develop independent study skills. It also helps develop information retrieval skills. These are very important in developing the skills that will help them in their GCSE studies. We can't have students doing no independent work in Year 7-9 and then expect them to be experts in revision skills, time management and independent study when they get to Year 10 and 11. We need to develop and grow these skills.

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

6. Year 8 News

Another week gone! Wow time really is flying at the moment. This week saw Year 8 students having an assembly on careers. There were a number of key points put across: to think honestly about their hopes and ambitions, and not be scared to follow their dreams; to set targets high and build skills for the future to keep their options open; to appreciate the hard work necessary to achieve what they want to do; and to define their own concept of what a successful career is based on their own personal beliefs and priorities.

With parents' evening this week, we understand that some parents and carers had difficulties connecting with some teachers, whether that was due to technical difficulties or no available time slots. If you require any feedback following your child's progress report then please let the year team know. The progress report is always a really good indication as to how your child is doing, but we fully understand that sometimes you may want a more detailed discussion and therefore please do contact the year team to support you further.

The vast majority of Year 8 really are showing us just what amazing students they are. We are currently the top year group for achievement points, attendance, and the amount of good quality homework being produced. This is an outstanding achievement and something that as a year team we are exceptionally proud of.

We do however need to remind some students that it is not acceptable to be missing lessons. We would like to encourage parents to use the SIMS Parent App to monitor their child's attendance to lessons and behaviour points as well as their amazing achievement points. Students who do not attend lessons, but are in school will be given truancy behaviour points on SIMS. We want to make it clear to students that every time they truant a lesson that is a significant amount of learning they have missed.

We would like to remind students to come appropriately dressed for the change of weather, I'm sure you will all agree it seems to have got a lot colder very quickly! As you will be aware, Year 8 line up outside before entering the academy for tutor time, so it is important that students are wearing coats to keep warm.

Once again, keep up the hard work Year 8. Reflect on the assembly that was led by Mr Crawford. You can all achieve wonderful things if you start making the right choices now 😊

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

7. Year 9 News

We are now over half way through the half term and only three weeks and six days till Christmas. The weather is getting colder and the dark is drawing in, but students are still performing fantastically and still striving for great things.

Achievement points still pour in for Year 9, which is great to see. This is testimony to the dedication, hard work and wonderful ability of our year group. The current tally for this week is:

AED – 81
LGA – 110
RPH – 77
NST – 105

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 318 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 on students learning and enjoying school and do not 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 under a blazer 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 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 and 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

8. Design & Technology

Please can you save any soft drink cans, rinse them and bring them in to D&T for a Year 9 project. We are looking at recycling aluminium. There is a box in my classroom to put them in. Thank you in advance.

Mrs Reynolds
Teacher

9. Germany - Rhine Valley Trip

We realise that the 3 December is very short notice and tricky before Christmas, we have decided to extend the deposit deadline for the German trip to the 13 January.

Mrs McEvoy
Teacher

10. Year 10 News

Three more school weeks to go before the end of term. We are nearly there. Please continue to test twice weekly.

Our top achieving students this week are:

Joshua Carter-Strike, William Orr, Gerrard Sandell, Toby Thompson, Tommy Bluett, Isabel Bush, Scarlett Bush, Lisa Kracewicz, Summer McCormack, Erin O'Neill and Millie Walker. Well done to you all.

Our football team played against Sprowston last night and unfortunately the score was 3-2 to Sprowston. Great team performance though.

Finley Davey has his first boxing bout tomorrow night at the Mercure Hotel – best of luck Finley.

Our assembly and PHSE lessons this week have been focusing on work experience for next year. Please encourage your child to look for and apply for opportunities they are interested in.

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

11. Year 11 News

No update.

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

12. Sixth Form News

A few key dates:

UCAS DEADLINE – Friday, 3 December. Students should get their personal statements sent to me or Ms Davies as soon as possible.

Mock MMI for Medics – Week starting 29 November – deadline to sign up has passed, but if a student has missed to boat please email Chris at cs.HAScheme@norfolk.gov.uk

Personal Statement Workshop – final one! – Wednesday, 8 December 4-5. Register [HERE](#)

Apprenticeship Evening – Tuesday, 14 December – 7-8.30pm – a fantastic opportunity for students, parents, teachers to find out more about Apprenticeships. Register for the event [HERE](#)

Mock Interviews for Creative, Digital and Media Students – Monday, 13 and Tuesday, 14 December - an invaluable opportunity for Year 13s to have a mock on-line interview and receive helpful feedback. Register [HERE](#)

Possible Oxbridge Applications – Thursday, 16 December - 4-5pm primarily aimed at Year 12, but Year 13s are welcome too. The session will hear from current / former Oxbridge students about what it's *really* like being there. Not to be missed! Click [HERE](#) to register

Private Study Time:

An increasing number of students have been spending private study times on gaming websites. As such, we are now looking into banning these websites from the system. Whilst we appreciate that students may want some down time to socialise with friends, the majority of private study time must be used to catch up on work and revise, especially during PPE season.

Parents Evening:

Just a gentle reminder that parents evening will be online this year, and will be held on 7 December.

Apprenticeship Vacancies:

Norwich City College have lots of apprenticeship vacancies that include engineering, dental nursing, and accountancy to name a few. Each apprenticeship could open you up to a whole new world! Take a look and apply here: <https://www.ccn.ac.uk/courses/course-types/apprenticeships/vacancies/>

Christmas Hampers:

I would love to make a couple of Christmas Hampers for Mr Pimlott's annual hamper appeal from the lovely 6th Formers. I will be asking our leadership team (Emma, Adam, Shadrak, and Rosario) to manage this. They will be in touch with students to let them know the list of foods that can be collected. Boxes can be picked up from The Ark, and there is also paper to decorate them. With such a large 6th Form this year I think we could definitely manage **at least** 2 hamper boxes! The deadline for hampers is Monday, 13 December.

13. Careers

This week Year 10 students had an assembly explaining all about the work experience week, which will take place the same week as Year 7 Camp - Monday, 4 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 with some students making great contacts and being offered part-time jobs. Families should now have received a letter and Guide explaining the process and students have been given a 'Self-Placement' form to work through in their Skills for Life lessons. Careers Facilitator Caroline Davies 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 on 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/>

UCAS have released a new Careers Quiz to help young people decide what careers might best suit their interests and abilities. Once matched, students can explore job descriptions, courses that will help them on their journey and lots more. See it in action at www.ucas.com/careers-quiz

Mrs Davies
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

14. Library News

A reminder that our next movie afternoon is taking place next Tuesday, 30 November. We will be watching *Spirited Away* (PG), an anime adventure about a young girl who must rescue her parents from a town inhabited by spirits. Students who would like to attend should collect a letter from the library or fill in the consent form linked below. Movie Afternoon Consent Form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/XWxKh4t66s>

We would also like to make you aware that Library Club will not be running next Wednesday (1 December) due to staff training and the library will be closed after school on this date.

Finally, we would like to share details of an exciting new book award that students can get involved with. This term students are invited to take part in the Excelsior Award. This is a book award solely for comics, graphic novels and manga. Students pick a shortlist, read the three nominated books and then vote for their favourite. Once the votes are collected we will host a celebration event in the New Year for all students who took part. Visit the library to get involved!

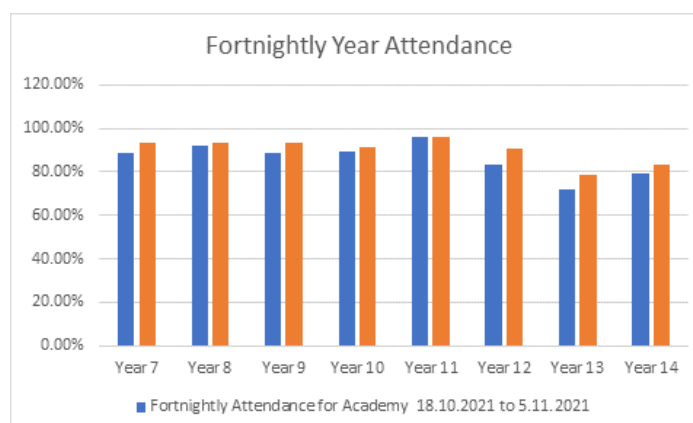
The graphic is a vertical banner for the Excelsior Award. At the top, it features a black background with a yellow 'SUPER!' speech bubble on the left, the 'excelsior award' logo in the center (with 'excelsior' in red and 'award' in blue over an open book), and a yellow 'WHOA' speech bubble on the right. Below this is a white bar with the text 'THE BOOK AWARD FOR COMICS & MANGA'. The main body of the graphic is divided into three horizontal sections. The first section is titled 'READ' in a yellow speech bubble and shows three book covers: 'MASON MOONS', 'WormBook', and 'BLUEBEARD'. Below the covers is the 'excelsior award WHITE' logo. The second section is titled 'RATE' in a white speech bubble and shows three book covers: 'Im', 'CANTO', and 'SUPERGIRL BEING SUPER'. Below the covers is the 'excelsior award BLUE' logo. The third section is titled 'REPEAT' in a white speech bubble and shows three book covers: 'NEW MUTANTS', 'Avengers: CIVIL WAR', and 'STRANGE SKIES OVER EAST BERLIN'. Below the covers is the 'excelsior award RED' logo.

Miss Ling
Librarian

15. Attendance

12/13 CAN	94.18%
12 JTH	89.36%
13 LWK	76.78%
C7 KLI	91.92%
D7 MKN	92.75%
R7 CSM	94.52%
SRB 7 EOK	77.50%
I7 CHA	95.12%
C8 ABR	98.60%
D8 NWA	94.09%
I8 KMJ	90.84%
R8 SNA	90.49%
SRB 8 EOK	96.25%
C9 AED	92.87%
D9 LGA	93.39%
I9 RPH	92.26%
R9 NST	95.93%
SRB 9 EOK	60.00%
C10 TTH	94.38%
D10 ATH	92.40%
I10 SMC	91.92%
R10 BLU	87.60%
SRB 10 EOK	93.33%
C11 KST	99.79%
D11 SMU	96.80%
I11 ERO	91.80%
R11 SRI	96.25%

Year 7	93.17%
Year 8	93.49%
Year 9	93.35%
Year 10	91.60%
Year 11	96.16%
Year 12	90.70%
Year 13	78.78%
Year 14	83.67%



Please see the abovementioned attendance data for the last two weeks for period 8 November 2021 to 19 November 2021 inclusive. Well done to the winning tutor group/s from each year group and SRB, who will be awarded the attendance trophy.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

16. 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



Thought for the Week

A poem for you in this week's reflection as I found it really encouraging. Sometimes we just need some encouraging words to lift us away from the difficult circumstances that we face.

**Underneath our feet we find
Those branches and thorns a grind.
Why is life so mean
It is as if no other scene.
Through life, you know, you will find
We sometimes just close our minds.
Those solutions we so desperately want
All appear like yesterday's many tyrants.
But, do not trouble or be dismayed
There are good days on the way.
When you look beyond the norm
You'll find you need not conform.
Be bold, be happy, be confident
You are not meant to lament.
These things so sure today
Can vanish without delay.
So when trouble comes your way
Do not accept defeat and ruin your day
Move forward with a focused view
Stay positive in all you do.**

Through out our lives, God has always promised to be with us to provide comfort, hope and a bright future. And with a gentle reminder, I just want you to know He is only a prayer away.

God bless you.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain