

**Open Academy Update 7 January 2022**  
**For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child.**

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

**Happy New Year!**

Welcome back to the spring term and, with a third of the academic year gone already, we come back to a short sharp half term which will be over before we know it. It is therefore important that all years, but especially the exam Years 11 and 13, are fully focussed from now on!

Firstly, however, I will start with a plea. As per government instructions, we have tested everyone for COVID as they have returned. As a strategy this has worked picking up 3 cases. However, we know of more cases where, thanks to home testing, the children have not come in to school yet. Our strategy will work best if you follow up our initial test with a home test this weekend – Key Stage 4 on Saturday, Key Stage 3 on Sunday. If we all do this, we should identify any cases that were just developing that we missed. It is then really important to test regularly – every 3 days – and report your child's results. I know it is a pain and I have been guilty of doing tests a day or two late because it is easy to forget, but the more we test and keep the virus out, the more we keep the whole community safe. So:

**All to test again at home this weekend**

**Then testing twice per week / every 3-4 days from now on please**

**Record test results on the school system – [www.testregister.co.uk/login](http://www.testregister.co.uk/login)**

We are in the fortunate position of having enough tests at the moment and you should have enough from what we have provided. Please do however talk to your child about the importance of the tests. Each box of tests is worth well over £50 and yet we have had at least 4 reports of a box of discarded tests on the routes home from school. I would be mortified to think this was deliberate as this valuable resource is given with the sole purpose of helping keep the community, of which we are all a part, safe.

Please note, the school's vaccination team will be in again on the 25 January for all 12-15 year olds to get their second vaccination. We are not sure of the details yet - for instance if those who missed out can have their first vaccine can have it on the day. What we do know is that you will receive a letter shortly and you will be asked for your consent once again. Consent for the first vaccine will NOT be held over for this one, so you will have to consent again for the second dose - more details as soon as we have them.

Moving on, I would like to draw your attention to a webinar from the 'Kooth' a children and young people's mental health and wellbeing support service – please see the flyer at the end of the newsletter – you can join anonymously and find out what they offer.

As we go into the spring term no doubt Year 9 will start thinking in terms of options – so Mr Ward has added a piece to the newsletter to outline the process for this year, what will happen and when, so hopefully this will answer a few questions you might have forming.

I note that uniform on return is generally good, however, the odd student has a bit of work to do this weekend to ensure they have all the correct uniform in place for Monday. Please note that leggings are not appropriate for school and not acceptable and blazers must always be worn. If student need an extra layer the jumper is available to purchase still – to be worn under the blazer and we are keen for students to have a coat that fits over their blazer, which, if it gets cold in school from our ventilation, we will allow them to wear in class. However, this is at individual teacher's discretion – depending on the conditions in their classroom at the time.

Hubs re-start next week so, if students haven't been doing homework regularly, they should not be surprised to find Hub on their timetable, which we expect them to attend to catch up on missed work, not as punishment, but to support because they are not keeping up with essential work.

With so much to take in at the start of term, I will leave it there, simply with a warm welcome back, and the encouragement for students to get down to work quickly as this is a very short half term.

Jon Ford  
Principal

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### 1. Options

As you are aware Year 9 complete Key Stage 3 in July. In Key Stage 4 there are opportunities to study fewer subjects in greater depth whilst maintaining an academic core offer of English, maths, science, a humanity, a modern language, core PE and RE, as well as skills for life (our PSHE, SRE and citizenship programme). Students will be familiar with the term options. As you will note from the skills for life section of the knowledge organiser on page 2 that your child has brought home today this is the term when the process takes place. Lessons will focus support alongside the main curriculum to explain the benefits of each course as well as where it may lead. Skills for Life lessons will have substantial careers input.

The timeline is as follows:

November/December - Students complete assessments, teachers mark them and then report to parents on first Year 9 exams on SIMs.

January / February - All the teachers check the courses are available and compliant with the national curriculum until 2025. We prepare the options booklet. The range and scope of courses available is much narrower than it used to be. Courses are being cut by the DFE every year.

An assembly will take place for Year 9 students to explain the process and hand out booklets at the end of February.

1<sup>st</sup> March - Pathways Evening when the options process is explained to parents. This will be in person if allowed.

February / March - Students complete assessments, teachers mark them and then report to parents on second Year 9 exams on SIMs (18 March)

Year 9 Parents' Evening - 22 March

Options forms completed by students in the next 2 weeks.

If a pupil needs careers advice beyond the lessons and curriculum they have had then inform AHOY at this stage.

There is not a first come first served system so early returns do not gain an advantage. We want students to have considered support.

During April and May staff will be recruited to courses based upon pupil choices. This process is lengthy. At this time students are welcome to change their minds.

During June timetables and logistics are worked out to ensure that the pupils have lessons for the two years of Key Stage 4.

Early July students are informed of the outcome and any last minute swaps are attempted.

Please be aware that this timeline is flexible because we are not certain what will happen with case numbers etc over the coming weeks. We managed to get the pupils their courses during the toughest of the lockdowns and are therefore confident that we can support your child in finding the best possible set of courses for GCSE.

Mr Ward  
Vice Principal

## **2. Year 7 News**

HAPPY NEW YEAR! After a successful autumn term, welcome back to 2022!

It is lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces in Year 7 on their return this year. The behaviour has been really good and everyone is off to a positive start, which is great.

Uniform on the whole is very good, but just a reminder that hoodies are not a replacement for a school jumper. Where it is really cold in a classroom because the teacher is ventilating the room properly, permission to put it on under their blazer during THAT lesson only, and should be removed after the lesson.

Also, a general reminder that at break and lunchtime, some students are leaving empty food wrappers out on the tables and on the floor. Please be reminded to place litter in the bins.

Finally, if students need to isolate due to Covid, it is recommended that they still go onto Microsoft Teams and complete any work that is set on there. If all of the work is completed online, then students should work through their new knowledge organisers (these were handed to students this morning).

Keep up the great work!

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 7  
Mr Hawkins – Cover Supervisor

## **3. Year 8 News**

Happy New Year to all our families. Welcome back to the spring term and hope you had a restful couple of weeks. So far the weather has been dry and bright, but cold. As a year group we line up outside, please make sure that students have appropriate coats/jackets with them. If parents/carers require any clarification for the school uniform policy please refer to the school website.

Hubs sessions will be commencing from Monday. Please ask your child to check their timetable, students are expected to attend Hub sessions. If for any reason they are not able to attend please contact the year team.

We are constantly amazed with the students' hard work and resilience. They have returned with positive attitudes and are ready to learn. This week the year group have been awarded over 750 achievement points, that's in just 2 days, WELL DONE!!

The top 10 achievers this week are: Jayden Alden, Yousif Al-Saddon, Farah Alwi, Ruby Anderson, Jasmine Attwater, Chelsea Bailey, Kanye Banham, Riley Benfield Oscar, Jay Birchenall and Ellie Blake.

We are really excited about this term and looking forward to continue to build on the successes and achievements of our fantastic students.

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

#### **4. Year 9 News**

No update.

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

#### **5. Rhine Valley Germany Trip**

As the deadline for deposit payments was postponed, the next payment of £110 is now due by 12 March 2022.

Mrs McEvoy  
Teacher

#### **6. Year 10 News**

Happy New Year to you and all your family and welcome back. We are feeling more optimistic about 2022. As always can we ask that students test twice weekly and please keep at home if they display any Covid symptoms. Please supply them with a couple of masks and encourage hand sanitising and social distancing as we do in school as much as possible.

Please refer to our uniform policy – our standards have slipped. Our school is cold due to essential ventilation so please encourage your child to wear thermal layers, a school jumper and/or coat. Leggings are not permitted and school shoes should be black and be able to be polished. Year 10 tutors will contact home if the uniform is not meeting our standards.

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

#### **7. Year 11 News**

Welcome back Year 11 to our Spring Term! It is so nice to see everyone back and throwing themselves into the term so well. This is an important term for Year 11, as it's where we will be doing lots of final learning and revising for the upcoming GCSE exams. I am looking forward to seeing everyone back into Hubs as of next Monday and working hard.

A quick reminder that it can get a little cold in the academy due to extra ventilation because of Covid, so please encourage your child to wear a t-shirt under their school shirt should they need it and wear a school jumper under their blazer. Also, leggings are not allowed to be worn; students should be in school trousers.

As ever, if parents or students have any concerns or queries please do not hesitate to contact us in the year office.

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

#### **8. 6th Form News**

No update.

Mrs Molloy  
Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form

## 9. Drama

A reminder to all Year 8 students that they either need to be barefoot in drama or to have the gravity style grip socks to do practical work.

Drama club is open to all students in KS3 and meets at 3.15 – 4.15 on a Wednesday in the Drama Studio. It's a great opportunity to make new friends and build confidence whilst playing fun drama games and working towards performances.

Mrs Ormosi  
Teacher

## 10. Library News

A happy new year to all of our students!

Why not start the new year with an up-to-date library account. Please ensure any library books you have at home are returned or renewed as soon as possible. Reminders for any outstanding books will be sent home in the next few weeks.

We run a number of clubs in the library and are always happy to welcome new members. If you've not been to any of our clubs before, why not pop along, see what it's all about and try something new! The following clubs are taking place this term and will resume next week:

### Books & Biscuits • Thursday Lunchtime

Our weekly reading group where we talk about the books we are reading (there are no set books so students are welcome to read a book of their own choice), share book recommendations and play reading related games.

### Comics & Manga Club • Friday 3-4pm

A chance for lovers of comics, graphic novels and manga to get together to discuss their favourite titles, learn more about the format and have some fun! Each week has a different theme or activity.

### Library Club • Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 3-4pm

The library is open to students after school for study or recreational use. Whether you want to revise for a test that is coming up, complete homework or relax with friends while using the libraries resources, the library is open every day except Tuesday.

Miss Ling  
Librarian

## 11. Attendance

Welcome Back!

Well done to the 239 students who achieved 100% attendance for the month of December 2021. All these students have been given achievement points.

Just a reminder that we have a designated absence email of [student.absence@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:student.absence@open-academy.org.uk) to notify ourselves of any absences/appointments etc for your son/daughter.

### Admissions

The following students have started with us this week:

- Kelly Fable – Year 9 – Tutor Group: D9 LGA – Transferred from Notre Dame
- Evie Goodby – Year 9 – Tutor Group: D9 LGA – Transferred from Norwich School for Girls

- Lacey Cook – Year 10 – Tutor Group: D10 ATH - Transferred from Acle Academy
- Ariyan Mahin – Year 9 – Tutor Group: C9 AED - Arrived from Bangladesh

We are delighted to welcome them to Open Academy.

Mrs Ganson  
Attendance Officer

## 12. Chaplain's News and Reflection

I just wanted to start this new year off with a poem called Happy 365 Days by Catherine Pulsifer that can be of great encouragement to us all. It's always great to welcome a new year in and to say good bye to an old year. A new year is full of hope and prospects for all of us.

*Happy New Year to you and your family too  
May you celebrate the day and look forward to the new  
May you see a year full of happiness and health  
May your pockets be full and you will have your share of wealth.*

*Each year brings challenges that is for sure  
Persist and persevere and you will endure.  
For success will be found for the one who does that  
At the end of the year you will deserve a good pat.*

*Take the time to enjoy those near to you  
And always stay positive never be blue.  
The important things in life are never things  
It is the relationships we have and the love they bring.*

*Always be thankful for the blessings you have  
And that includes being thankful for your Mum and Dad.  
Be sure to thank God each and every day  
For with God in your life you will not go astray.*

*Let your attitude be positive and bright  
And always walk away from those who want to fight.  
For life is too short for anger and jealousy  
Instead live your life with zealously.*

*Life each day and take the time to see  
How wonderful the simple things of life can be.  
And always make sure you have balance in your work and play  
By doing that you will enjoy 365 days.*

*By following these suggestions, you will be glad  
As a very happy new year you will have!*

I wish you all, and pray for a wonderful year ahead. God bless.

Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain



## Young peoples Webinars

Hello,

From January 2022 Kooth are running sessions for young people to attend to learn more about our service and the support that is available to them.

An online session which will give an overview of Kooth & how it can support your child's mental health & wellbeing.

About this event

This information session is designed to help young people understand how Kooth can support them on a daily basis with their mental health and wellbeing.

Kooth is an anonymous service, cameras and mics will be off and feel free to change your name upon joining the session.

The session will be via zoom: <https://kooth.zoom.us/j/94229115452>

Sign up Via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/kooth-33650470885>

The session will cover:

An Overview of Kooth

A Live tour of the Kooth site

An opportunity for Questions & Answers about Kooth

Please be aware you have registered through Eventbrite and they have their own privacy policy. We, at Kooth plc, do not pass on your personal data that we have collected through your registration. Your information will be used to send future Kooth correspondence. If you wish to opt out, please get in touch with the event organiser.

I have attached the link to the short intro to Kooth video: <https://youtu.be/xbYQOLeGDbQ>

